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Wednesday, 29 August 2018, 10 a.m.

New York

President:	Lord Ahmad/Mr. Hickey	(United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland)
Members:	Bolivia (Plurinational State of)	Mrs. Cordova Soria
	China	Mr. Wu Haitao
	Côte d'Ivoire	Mr. Ipo
	Equatorial Guinea	Mr. Esono Mbengono
	Ethiopia	Ms. Guadey
	France	Mrs. Gueguen
	Kazakhstan	Mr. Umarov
	Kuwait	Mr. Alotaibi
	Netherlands	Mr. Van Oosterom
	Peru	Mr. Meza-Cuadra
	Poland	Ms. Wronecka
	Russian Federation	Mr. Nebenzia
	Sweden	Mr. Orrenius Skau
	United States of America	Mr. Hunter

Agenda

Maintenance of international peace and security

Mediation and settlement of disputes

Letter dated 3 August 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2018/586)

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The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Maintenance of international peace and security

Mediation and settlement of disputes

Letter dated 3 August 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2018/586)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Argentina, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Cuba, Cyprus, Djibouti, Egypt, Estonia, Fiji, Georgia, Germany, Guatemala, Haiti, India, Indonesia, the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kenya, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Malaysia, Maldives, Mexico, Morocco, Myanmar, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, the Philippines, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sri Lanka, the Sudan, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine, the United Arab Emirates, the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela and Viet Nam to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the following briefers to participate in this meeting: The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury; and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem, Co-founder of PAIMAN Alumni Trust.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I also invite Her Excellency Ms. Joanne Adamson, Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

I propose that the Council invite the Permanent Observer of the Observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations to participate in this meeting, in accordance with the provisional rules of procedure and the previous practice in this regard.

It is so decided.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of the members of the Council to document S/2018/586, which contains a letter dated 3 August 2018 from the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting a concept note on the item under consideration.

I now wish to warmly welcome the Secretary-General His Excellency Mr. António Guterres and give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: War is becoming increasingly complex, and so is mediating peace. Today, internal conflicts frequently take on regional and transnational dimensions. Many feature a deadly mix of fragmented armed groups and political interests funded by criminal activities. Conflicts around the world drag on for years and decades, holding back development and stunting opportunities. Comprehensive peace agreements are becoming more elusive and short-lived. Political will wanes; international attention drifts. The Central African Republic, for example, has suffered overlapping national and local conflicts for decades, yet some 15 peace agreements have been signed there since 1997.

As bad as the situation is in many parts of the world, I am convinced that it is within our power to tackle and reverse these trends. That is why, since the beginning of my tenure, one of my key priorities has been a surge in diplomacy for peace. As I have consistently stressed, we must make prevention our priority. But prevention also includes investment in mediation, peacebuilding and sustainable development. We must be bold and creative in bringing together the avenues and capacities that are available for mediation.

The United Nations has a number of mediation resources that we deploy in various ways. My Special Envoys and Representatives pursue consultations, good offices and formal talks, often alongside envoys and mediators from regional organizations or Member States. They may lead a political process, as in Libya or Yemen. They may head a complex peacekeeping operation, as in Mali, or they may focus on prevention from a regional office, as in West Africa.

Collaboration with other mediation actors is key. Allow me to mention two recent examples. In Madagascar, my Special Adviser has coordinated closely with the special envoys of the African Union, the Southern Africa Development Community, the

European Union and the International Organization of la Francophonie to facilitate Malagasy-led negotiations to hold peaceful and inclusive negotiations aimed at ensuring free and fair elections. In the Gambia, coordinated action by the Economic Community of West African States, the African Union, the United Nations and neighbouring countries succeeded in preventing a major political crisis and supporting a democratic transition.

Members of the United Nations Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers are providing advice in the Central African Republic on transitional justice issues, as part of the peace process there. In Yemen, they are assisting with the design of the mediation process led by my Special Envoy. In South Sudan, they have provided support to the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, which is leading the mediation process. The decisive engagement of the region, particularly the neighbouring countries — backed by the Security Council — was a critical element in the agreement recently reached by the South Sudanese leaders to end the conflict.

Discreet engagement also plays a role. Continuing talks with the Taliban, despite years of war and continued fighting, and away from the glare of publicity, allows position to be clarified. Renewed engagement with the Democratic People's Republic of Korea has also benefited from this approach. The United Nations also works with private mediation actors, including non-governmental organizations, which may have greater freedom to establish contacts and foster dialogue with armed groups, militias and others. Meanwhile, from Afghanistan to Zimbabwe, an enormous range of other actors — national bodies and civil society groups, including women's organizations, religious leaders and young activists — play a part in mediation at the local and community level.

Mediating an end to today's complex conflicts means that we must bring all these tracks together in a coordinated way. We must also find new ways to pursue the more inclusive approaches that are critical to successful mediation. That is what we in the United Nations are trying to do. I continue to offer my good offices and personal engagement wherever they can add value, alongside my envoys and special representatives, drawing on the expertise of the entire United Nations and those in the broader mediation community.

To complement my efforts and those of my envoys, I have established the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. I am pleased to have the Archbishop of Canterbury with us today, and look forward to working with him on several concrete initiatives in the coming months. I am also grateful to former Nigerian President Olusegun Obasanjo, a member of the Board, who travelled to Liberia on my behalf to support the peaceful transfer of power after the 2017 elections. That is just one example of how we can deploy Board members in the cause of conflict prevention. The Board's members have experience and networks across the entire spectrum of mediation. I look to them to provide tailored advice, to find new entry points and to help train and build capacity among our partners.

Successful mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes requires a deep understanding of leaders and their constituencies and strong political will. The Joint Declaration of Peace and Friendship signed by the leaders of Ethiopia and Eritrea last month, after 20 years of conflict and stalemate, is an example of political courage that is already having a positive effect throughout the region, but we must also continue and strengthen our efforts to move beyond negotiations with political and military elites. That means working at the subnational and local levels to help build peace from the ground up. Local authorities, civil society and traditional and religious leaders all have critical roles to play. The national conference process in Libya, for example, is a bottom-up, inclusive process that has provided valuable insights into the aspirations of the Libyan people. My envoys are supporting local efforts to address communal conflicts in South Sudan and engaging with a women's advisory board and the Civil Society Support Room on the Syrian process. In the Central African Republic, we are engaging at the local level with national authorities and religious leaders in support of the African Union initiative.

We are also investing in women's meaningful participation and leadership in peace processes, ensuring that women always have a seat at the table and that their voices are heard. I have emphasized the importance of inclusive processes to my own special envoys, and have appointed three women to senior mediation roles in recent months. The emergence of regional networks of women mediators is another important development. The Nordic Women Mediators network and FemWise, the African Union's network of women mediators, are notable in that regard. Members

of my High-level Advisory Board are already in contact with those groups.

Inclusive mediation requires paying greater attention to the gender dimensions of conflict, including conflict-related sexual violence and the gendered impact of decisions around post-war reconstruction. For example, the design of a post-conflict constitutional committee or a federal system will have a significant impact on women and their participation.

We also need to do much more to engage with young people, who are critical agents of change and advocates for peace. It is encouraging that six young refugees took part as observers in the South Sudan High-Level Revitalization Forum. We must encourage and support the participation of young men and women in peace processes. We will hold the first international conference on that subject in Helsinki early next year.

Finally, we should invest in the mediation and conciliation opportunities offered by information technology. We all are aware of the role that social media can play in exacerbating divisions and provoking hostility. However, social platforms can also be a tool to bring communities together, stimulate dialogue, share information and heal historic wrongs.

Parties to conflict are highly attuned to and play on divisions in the international community. The Security Council plays a central role in conflict resolution, particularly when it signals to warring parties that they must settle their disputes peacefully. When the Council is united, we all are more effective, including in our mediation efforts. When the Council cannot find unity, our mediation efforts suffer. Council members, and Member States more broadly, can also support mediation efforts by ensuring that regions speak with one voice. Consistent messaging by regional and subregional organizations, which have the expertise, experience and capacity to find innovative responses to the most testing challenges, can be a great support to the work of the Council.

As the conflict landscape has changed, so has our understanding of what constitutes an effective mediation process. Innovative thinking on mediation is no longer an option; it is a necessity. I urge representatives to commit to a more effective use of mediation as a tool to save and to improve the lives of millions of people around the world.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his briefing.

I now warmly welcome The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and give him the floor.

Archbishop Welby: Let me put on record my sincere thanks to the Permanent Representative of the United Kingdom, Her Excellency Dame Karen Pierce, for her invitation to address this organ during this open debate on the maintenance of international peace and security. It is also a great honour to speak under the presidency of Lord Ahmad. He is an outstanding representative of the British Government.

I would also like to express my sense of loss after the death of one of the greatest servants of the United Nations, and indeed of peace, Mr. Kofi Annan. His life was lived with a vision of reconciliation and with a personal integrity that will earn him lasting renown.

It is a privilege to follow the Secretary-General's words. We could not have asked for a better opening briefing to set the context of this debate. I greatly look forward to hearing from our civil society representative.

I am honoured to be here today, speaking in a dual capacity as a member of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation and as a religious leader within a global Church. Anglicanism is a global Church in which the average member is poor, a woman or someone living in a conflict or post-conflict setting who has the aspirations of all vulnerable people, above all a longing for peace.

The Church and other faith communities are intimately present where there are conflicts. We cannot and will not walk away from them. For example, in South Sudan, Church leaders, including the leader of the country's Anglican Church, Archbishop Justin Badi Arama, play an increasingly important role in moving the whole peace process beyond the current roadblocks that representatives know so well.

However, mediation can be effective only when it is in the context of structures of reconciliation. Where mediation is about resolving conflict, reconciliation is the process of transforming violent conflict into non-violent coexistence where communities have come to terms with history and are learning to disagree well. Mediation by itself, however skilled, is like using a garden hose to put out a forest fire, when what is needed is rain over the whole area so as to let new life grow and sustain itself.

We therefore need to complement mediation — in fact, the whole conflict cycle — within the framework of reconciliation. The vision of the United Nations founders was no less than to abolish conflict. Many of them were responding to the words of Jesus Christ, applicable to all parts of the Earth, in the Beatitudes: "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called the children of God". The very life of Jesus was given in the cause of peace with God, with oneself and with others.

There are and always will be profound differences among and within nations, but the terms on which those differences are dealt with look very different today to 70 years ago. We have avoided global nuclear war, yet not its continuing menace. However, today the international rules-based order is struggling. National interests are still too often allowed, even in the Chamber, to overcome the wisdom that those who lived through global war learned. Without dealing with even passionate disagreement peacefully, no national interest can prevail. Short-term advantage for one interest leads to long-term destruction for all through great wars and small conflicts.

Reconciliation is not an act that comes at the end of the conflict cycle. It must become the framework that enables us to sustain peace and to prevent conflict cycles repeating with an ever-increasing destructive force. A British football coach, a manager of the Liverpool team, once famously told his team to get their retaliation in first. If we are to transform conflict, we need instead to get our reconciliation in first.

I ask representatives whether the approaches to reconciliation are currently adequate, especially using local, religious and traditional sources of peacemaking? Even in this time of uncertainty and renewed international rivalry, for the sake of future peace we must invest in reconciliation and learn how to support transformation in human relationships.

The role that an institution such as the Church plays in that regard is significant. Religious institutions are often the only functioning institutions in a fragile or pre-conflict situation. They are present before, during and after conflict. They provide early warnings of signs of conflict in communities. Working with and through religious and other institutions to provide pre-emptive reconciliation frameworks can prevent conflict becoming violent or returning to violence. It can set it on a different path. Their work is done by the young and the elderly, by women and men and by the rich and the poor. They seek a people's peace.

If we can learn how to set conflict transformation in a framework of reconciliation, including at the grass-roots level and not only by elites in conferences, we open ourselves to working together in new and more effective ways as we strive for peace, as the Secretary-General has just said. We enable mediation to be orders of magnitude more effective. As I have already said, the United Nations is the most extraordinary example of a framework of reconciliation, but that framework needs to be embedded in current ways of working and analysis.

A cross-agency and cross-departmental reconciliation strategy, supported by the necessary resources, will open up current ways of working to new and innovative ways of negotiating strategies for peace, offering more options in an increasingly complex international system. There is already much good work taking place. The work of the Mediation Support Unit, which also provides excellent Secretariat support for the High-level Advisory Board, is vital. The Advisory Board itself is an important and innovative step towards a new way of approaching conflict transformation.

Partnership between United Nations offices and groups, such as the Network for Traditional and Religious Peacemakers, helps to build a shared understanding. The work of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide, particularly the production of the Plan of Action for Religious Leaders and Actors to Prevent Incitement to Violence that Could Lead to Atrocity Crimes, provides an important framework for how religious communities need to contribute to preventing the escalation of conflicts. I also want to acknowledge the important work of the United Nations Inter-agency Task Force on Religion and Development.

However, it is overdue for the United Nations to move beyond those still fragmented efforts. Enabling transformative reconciliation must be at the core when we build United Nations partnerships with faith communities. Let me pledge my support to the Secretary-General in that work. I have the privilege of having assembled a team in my office that is already learning from past experiences. Many of its members have worked with the United Nations. Together, we can reach out to counterparts from other faiths to encourage their involvement and support, as they are

already doing. That is our collaborative offer to the United Nations in this time of global pain.

Large tracts of territory around the world are violently contested in situations where government has failed. They are differently governed spaces, where no official Government rules. Even there, the Church and other faith groups, sometimes existing precariously, provide a form of hope and mediation in those extraordinarily difficult contexts. As we think about new and innovative approaches to conflict prevention, this is an example of how the United Nations, Member States and faith actors can be allies, with the potential for transformational results.

As the Secretary-General has stated, women's and youth participation in mediation and conflict transformation is especially essential to success. In the Anglican community, we are developing a programme called Women on the Front Line, which offers support and equips women based on their contexts. It has already been used in several places with severe conflict. It will need to be complemented by youth on the front line, as the Council emphasized in the year 2000. Earlier this year, I hosted an Emerging Peacemakers Forum in London, bringing together 50 young Christians and Muslims from around the world in pre-emptive reconciliation to learn about leadership in peacebuilding. The superb work done by my colleagues liberated participants to inspiring visions of peace. They will serve peace for many years.

In conclusion, I again thank the United Kingdom for the opportunity to address the Security Council at today's open debate. I am grateful to the Secretary-General for his leadership on the issue and willingness to take innovative steps to seek out new ways of working. At a time when the United Nations is debating and pointing to the horrors in Myanmar, we are reminded that conflict destroys dignity, hope and all of our best dreams and is often intractable. While I would like to thank all of those who will speak today on behalf of their States, I urge the Security Council to commit to the ongoing transformation of violent conflict into non-violent disagreement and eventually into a truly inclusive approach to participation in mediation and reconciliation, now and for future generations.

The President: I thank the Archbishop for his very insightful and expert briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Qadeem.

Ms. Qadeem: It is an honour to be here in the Security Council today. I thank the United Kingdom for giving me the opportunity to address this important topic. I would like to focus my intervention on the role of women in mediation.

As Council members all know, for 18 years, as women peace practitioners and strategists working on the front lines of today's most complex global conflicts, we have called for, advocated and demanded recognition and inclusion in peace processes and at the peace tables that world Powers sponsor and facilitate. But despite the rhetoric of support and even the resolutions and national action plans that States have adopted, we as women remain largely on the outside. Why is that?

I would like to start by addressing some common misconceptions. So often we hear that women's exclusion is cultural and that they cannot play a mediation role in a particular conflict because of local cultural factors. However, if that were the case, surely there would be vast differences between, for example, Nepal and Colombia. They hardly share the same culture. Women's exclusion is not about culture; it is about power. Or we hear the integrity or legitimacy of women's peace coalitions being questioned. Frankly, as suggested by the *Better Peace Tool*, one of the booklets developed by the International Civil Society Action Network (ICAN), we should reframe the question. Why should wielding weapons and threatening violence be the only ticket to peace talks? If we are serious about achieving peace, we also need peace actors, such as civil society and relief workers. Everywhere we look at the local level, we see women doing the majority of that work.

Perhaps it is because we think of a mediator as having power and gravitas — terms that are inherently masculine — with the ability to knock heads or press for compromises. If the wars and conflicts we experience today were similar to those of the nineteenth or twentieth century, perhaps that form of high-power mediation would be the only solution. But today's conflicts are different. There is a proliferation of actors, who are often highly localized. So many of the key players are often hidden and, frankly, unreachable by United Nations envoys. If the Council is serious about ending wars, then acknowledging their complexity is a critical first step because it can lead to designing mediation processes that address that complexity by drawing on the vast resources we have as local actors, and especially as women.

Perhaps some are now sceptical and wondering how women can talk to violent extremism groups, such as Boko Haram, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) or the Taliban, who are typical actors in the wars of our time. Years ago, our sister Visaka of Sri Lanka took seven other mothers of missing soldiers, like her, to meet the Tamil Tigers. And after convincing the LTTE, she successfully mediated a ceasefire, followed by peace talks between the LTTE and the Government of Sri Lanka. In Hudaydah, Yemeni women are saving lives on the front lines of a devastating war where people are completely under siege. Food for Humanity, an organization led by a woman and a partner of our coalition, the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership, was able to mediate and convince conflicting parties to allow people to leave the area. It also provided humanitarian aid after the Red Cross pulled out in early June.

Let me share my own experience in Pakistan. In one of the areas hardest hit by violent extremism and the military's responses to it, there, where no one would dare stand up to the Taliban, out of necessity I had a dialogue with their leaders. For us working and living at the local level, there is no other option. I found the courage, not only to speak with and persuade them to release my staff members, whom they had captured because they were carrying out health and education projects, but also to take the chance to seek support for the implementation of the same projects. That is mediation. I have found that in mediation, it is essential to speak to each person's core humanity. Believe me, it breaks down barriers and works miracles. I am not essentializing women or claiming that all women can do it. I am speaking specifically about women, such as the members of the Women's Alliance, who have the extraordinary vision, courage and skill to engage in such deeply dangerous work.

Often the barrier-question posed is: Who are the right women for the job? Again, ICAN's *Better Peace Tool* provides the answer: women's organizations with certain core values; women with the skills and knowledge relevant to the negotiations and agenda; women who understand the art of crafting the storytelling process in order to humanize potential; women who employ imaginative thinking to create new possibilities within cultural realities; women with the ability to draft an effective agreement; women who are self-assured and persevering; women with leadership qualities and lack of ego.

Lastly, I would like to set out some lessons I have drawn from my own experiences of mediation and from examples of many women mediators and peacebuilders around the world. In spite of all of the institutional, cultural and structural barriers, women's mediatory roles at the informal levels have often served as blueprints for negotiations. One reason for that is that women have a different connection to communities, families and households that can be particularly helpful in localized peacebuilding.

Women also place greater relative weight on interaction-specific aspects of mediation than men do and often perceive most negotiations to include a relationship dimension, even in the most challenging environment. From intervention with family members who may be fighting with armed groups, to advocacy for referendums associated with peace agreements, to serving as a part of early warning systems for conflict prevention, women provide a grass-roots underpinning to peacebuilding processes. In the context of international conflicts, we all know that emphasis on relational aspects and fairness in distribution are valuable traits for achieving lasting peace.

Women should be involved in mediation and peace processes because, at a basic level, their participation is a question of equity and equality. It matters because peace negotiations and the agreements they generate set the structure and design for post-conflict reconstruction and politics, as just mentioned by the Secretary-General, which affect the lives of not only women but the whole of society. Women mediators can ensure that processes and agreements are more gender-sensitive and thus more comprehensive and legitimate. For example, women can demand language on violence against women and on women's citizenship rights or women's participation in transitional and implementation bodies.

Women's engagement is particularly important in mediating track-two and track-three processes. Women effectively use soft power and the humanization of communication to create more open and flexible processes. Women's bridging capabilities and future orientation can help parties find common cause in reaching agreement for the civic good.

It is usually assumed that women only represent women and that they do not bring experience or expertise on other issues to the table. That has the

effect of sidelining women and seeking their views only on soft, social or community issues. That is not correct. My experience from the platform of the Women's Alliance for Security Leadership, while interacting with women peacemakers, reveals that women mediators strategically start with the softer issue — that is, the common societal issues — by seeking consensus and then take on the hard-core issues, such as de-weaponization and de-escalation, to completely transform radical youth and women. Women must be included in track-one mediation processes to achieve a greater degree of gender equality in society and its institutions, and to improve the durability of peace for everyone — men, women and children, and States and citizens alike.

I believe that women have skills and experience at all levels of mediation and peacebuilding, but qualified women are not being used to engage in mediation work. I believe that the recently established Commonwealth Women Mediators Network will provide the much-needed system of patronage and structural support to women to provide them with opportunities of mentoring, advice provision and access to new practice-based experience that will help them increase their competitiveness, confidence and capacity to take on advanced leadership roles and upper-level positions.

We are seeing conflicts become more protracted and metastasize across borders and continents. I have a question. How much longer can the world really afford to exclude those of us who are making peace at the front lines?

In ideal conditions, peace processes would be between two major parties — for instance, two nations, with one mediator. Ceasefire lines could be drawn and fighters could go home to their own communities. But we do not live in the realm of fantasy. Our wars are complex and multifaceted. Our peace processes must be rooted in that reality. It is time to value, recognize and seek the advice of women who are already mediating on the ground and who have access to and the trust of the parties — whether in Pakistan, Afghanistan, Yemen or Syria. Only together can we foster just and sustainable peace.

The President: I thank for Ms. Qadeem for her briefing.

I shall now make a statement in my capacity as Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.

In January 2017, the Secretary-General gave the Security Council a challenge. He asked the question of how we can use our powers under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations more effectively to prevent conflict (see S/PV.7857). Although Chapter VI is about more than mediation, it is an important part of the answer. The Security Council is often uniquely placed to support mediation efforts to prevent and indeed resolve conflict. But the Council is far from being the only actor.

The complex nature of modern conflict, which the Secretary-General and others have already referred to, means that averting or ending violence requires a concerted approach from a range of actors, both within the family of the United Nations and outside it. That includes regional and subregional organizations, civil society, religious leaders and, as we have just heard, women's mediation networks.

I am therefore delighted and pleased that we have heard from representatives of those groups today. I would particularly like to thank the Most Reverend Archbishop of Canterbury and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for their very insightful, expert and thoughtful briefings to the Council today. As Ms. Qadeem said, in peacemaking in conflict resolution we must speak to the core humanity of people and, to echo a phrase used by the Most Reverend Archbishop of Canterbury, it is only then that we will achieve the "people's peace".

In the United Kingdom, we have seen the importance of mediation first-hand. The division and violence in Northern Ireland took years of sustained negotiations to resolve, and finally ended with the signing of the Belfast Agreement, also known as the Good Friday Agreement, in 1998. It shows the value of patient and persistent mediation, and the 20 years of peace that have followed illustrate clearly why we must give mediation efforts our utmost and full support.

Today, as we look around the world, in Yemen and Libya Martin Griffiths and Ghassan Salamé are leading efforts to facilitate peaceful resolutions to some of the most complex and long-running conflicts, with great human cost. But we should not make the mistake of thinking that mediation works only at the national level. In countries like the Central African Republic and Mali, we have seen the importance of

community-level mediation conducted or facilitated by peacekeeping missions.

In the Central African Republic, the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA) has successfully facilitated mediation between armed groups in several areas of the country, such as the agreement signed in the town Bouar in December 2017. MINUSCA is also involved in strengthening local capacity to resolve conflicts, building trust between communities and advocating the participation of women and young people.

In Mali, the mandate of the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali recognizes the importance of community engagement and local mediation. It is essential in protecting civilians and in stabilizing communities and the country. It has facilitated the training of 703 mediators, including 225 women, who have served on community-based mediation panels.

More broadly, the United Nations has made good progress in the past decade to professionalize and strengthen its mediation role with the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit in 2006, the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers in 2008 and the High-level Advisory Board for Mediation in 2017. The United Nations special political missions play quite a unique role in fostering and supporting dialogue and preventing conflict.

If we cast our minds back to last December, Mr. Olusegun Obasanjo, former President of Nigeria and a member of the High-level Advisory Board, as we heard from the Secretary-General, travelled to Liberia on the Secretary-General's behalf to support the first peaceful transfer of power in Liberia's history. Thus, there is much we can already be proud of in terms of what has been achieved. But equally, on reflecting on what has been achieved, it is important to recognize there is much more to do.

We now need to look forward towards the coming decade and address the changing nature of conflicts, their complexity and the increasing number of mediation actors. The United Kingdom believes that the Security Council has a pivotal and important role to play in that respect. We must include mediation in the toolkit that the Council uses to prevent and resolve conflicts. That includes working effectively with mediators from regional and subregional organizations. We therefore welcome the United Nations work to strengthen capacity in that particular area. It also means considering conflict resolution and mediation when we mandate peacekeeping and special political missions. We should learn and build on the examples of Mali and the Central African Republic, and ensure that mediation support is properly resourced.

Lastly but most importantly, as we have heard already, and as set out in resolution 1325 (2000), we must ensure without question the full, equal and meaningful participation of women in conflict resolution as leaders and decision-makers at both the national and the local levels. Women's participation should not be an option. It is a central and pivotal part of conflict resolution. It is key to ensuring conflict resolution and lasting peace. It is a matter of ensuring respect for human rights and ensuring gender equality. As we all know — and we should reflect on this — the evidence points to that. When one considers the research, it also confirms that, where women are involved in peacekeeping, it increases the probability of peace lasting much longer. We therefore welcome the Secretary-General's efforts to promote gender parity in the United Nations, but also recognize that it is incumbent upon all of us — the United Nations system, Member States, civil society and religious leaders — to do more to promote women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution at all levels, including the appointment of women mediators.

Let me assure the Council that the United Kingdom is taking its responsibility very seriously, and we are therefore committing £1.6 million to the development of the Women Mediators across the Commonwealth network, to which Ms. Mossarat Qadeem alluded. Of course, the voice of young people must also be included. What is clear is the fact that the nature of conflict evolves, and as it evolves mediation will be needed more than ever. The United Nations must stand ready to ensure that it is equal to the task. Let me assure all colleagues and Member States across the United Nations and beyond that the United Kingdom will remain committed to supporting the Secretary-General in his efforts and focus to both professionalize and enhance the United Nations approach to mediation, with women rightfully playing a full, pivotal and equal part.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I shall now give the floor to the other members of the Security Council.

Mr. Esono Mbengono (Equatorial Guinea) (*spoke in Spanish*): Let me begin by thanking the United Kingdom for organizing this important open debate under the theme "Maintenance of international peace and security — mediation and settlement of disputes". We also thank the Secretary-General for his informative briefing on this topic. In addition, we are very grateful to be joined by The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for their briefings.

I am delivering this statement on behalf of the three non-permanent African members of the Security Council: Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia and Equatorial Guinea.

Although mediation is one of the most-used methods for conflict resolution by the international community, it has been almost a decade since the Security Council formally discussed it as part of its agenda (see S/PV.6108). Today's debate on mediation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts is very timely. It is also extremely fitting, given the increasing importance of mediation to respond to some of the perennial and long-term conflicts facing the world.

As the main organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council has a special role to play in promoting the effective use of peaceful resolutions to disputes in addressing security threats and challenges. Even more important is its role today in ensuring that mediation efforts — whether led by the United Nations, regional organizations or States Members — receive the necessary political support. That is particularly obvious at a time when the primacy of politics is becoming a guiding principle in the formulation and implementation of peace operation mandates.

Undoubtedly, the Secretary-General's call for a surge in diplomacy for peace and the priority that he has given to conflict prevention have gained momentum since he assumed the highest office of the United Nations. In view of the enormous peace and security challenges that we are facing today, prioritizing mediation is hardly an option. In that regard, we were encouraged by the General Assembly's adoption of the Secretary-General's reform process, which prioritizes prevention and the maintenance of peace as its overall goals. We also acknowledge the importance of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation, established by the Secretary-General, and the role of its members in complementing the work of his good offices, including Special Envoys, regional offices and political field missions.

Likewise, we especially welcome the great importance that the Secretary-General attaches to the mediation role of regional organizations. Clearly, the current global security challenges facing us are so complex and interconnected that they cannot be addressed only by the United Nations and the Security Council. Those challenges are not limited to a single place or geographic area and transcend the borders of individual nations and continents. Therefore, cooperation between the United Nations and regional organizations, such as the African Union, as set out in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, remains indispensable, perhaps now more than ever,.

That is particularly true today when multilateralism has been increasingly challenged and a renewed global commitment to collective security and the peaceful settlement of disputes, including through mediation, is more than ever necessary. As an example, we highlight the important and consistent role that the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the Economic Community of Central African States and other organizations have played in the areas of mediation and conflict resolution, which was well illustrated recently by the regional interventions in the crises of The Gambia, Guinea Bissau, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, among others. Article 4 (e) of the Constitutive Act of the African Union calls for the peaceful resolution of conflicts among States members of the Union, which is also detailed in article 3 of the Protocol relating to the Establishment of the Peace and Security Council of the African Union. In that context, the African Union has improved its mediation role and activities in recent years.

There are approximately 20 African Union special envoys, representatives and mediators deployed in countries in conflict and post-conflict situations throughout the continent. A mediation support unit was also established to provide capacity support to African Union mediators. We believe that the United Nations must continue its multifaceted support to strengthen the mediation role of the African Union and ensure greater cooperation and coherence by working closely with African Union special envoys, representatives and mediators on the ground. It is also important to continue

to encourage and step up the Council's practice of inviting special envoys, representatives and mediators of the African Union to public briefings, open debates and interactive informal discussions.

Considering the important role that women can play in mediation and raising awareness among other women, as acknowledged in resolution 1325 (2000), it is timely and essential to strengthen regional and international structures by including women, who bring to the table the qualities necessary to carry out the important task of mediation. The African Women Leaders Network is a good example of the great potential of this approach when applied to mediation.

In conclusion, the mediation efforts of the African Union seeking the lofty goal of silencing the guns in Africa complement the United Nations prevention agenda. That is why it makes a great deal of sense to work with the African Union to reach that noble objective. Important debates have already taken place during the twelfth annual joint consultative meeting between members of the United Nations Security Council and the African Union Peace and Security Council on this issue and, as one of the three African countries on the Security Council, we intend to continue that discussion in coming months in order to continue to explore avenues of cooperation between the United Nations and the African Union in that regard.

Mrs. Cordova Soria (Plurinational State of Bolivia) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the United Kingdom presidency for organizing this important informative meeting. We would also like to thank Secretary-General António Guterres for his briefing and take this opportunity to reiterate our strongest support for the conflict prevention agenda he is implementing. Finally, we thank The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for their inspiring briefings.

The alarming number of armed conflicts affecting the world, the number of victims, forcibly displaced persons and the threats of famine due to those conflicts are sufficient reasons for the international community to join forces to find solutions to those situations. Bolivia, in its commitment to respecting international law and as a State that promotes a culture of peace, always favours the pacific settlement of disputes, including through negotiation, enquiry, mediation, conciliation, arbitration, judicial settlement and resort to regional agencies or arrangements, in accordance with Chapter VI, Article 33, of the Charter of the United Nations.

In that regard, we appreciate and highlight the efforts and determination of the Secretary-General to prioritize conflict prevention as a guide for the work of the entire United Nations system and to place emphasis on mediation as a key tool for that purpose. The Secretary-General's report on United Nations activities to promote mediation is an important element for understanding the progress made by the Secretariat, its activities and, above all, its challenges in the task of supporting mediation as a tool for both conflict prevention and resolution.

Mediation must be a process that promotes commitment and knowledge of the historical, cultural and political specificities of a conflict and of the parties to the conflict. For such a process to be successful and sustainable over time, the participation and political will of the parties to the conflict is essential. The participation of all segments of society, especially women and young people, is also essential to the success of any mediation process. In that regard, we support the Secretary-General's efforts to increase the participation of women mediators as his special or personal envoys.

Only mediation that does not resort to the threat or use of force or to the imposition of conditions, but rather harmonizes the positions of the parties and seeks common ground and mutually acceptable solutions has a chance of success. That is why the role of mediators must be one of total neutrality and impartiality. Likewise, national ownership and the generation of confidence-building measures between the parties are elements that strengthen mediation processes.

To be effective, mediation efforts require a stable and consistent operational, logistical, security, administrative and financial environment. We are convinced that the various United Nations entities can support mediation efforts, each according to its thematic strengths and expertise or its regional location. In that sense, such efforts need to be coordinated in order to avoid duplication of work.

The United Nations, regional and subregional organizations and the international community, in general, should focus their efforts on building and strengthening the capacities and mediation initiatives of Member States, including through the training of

local mediators and the establishment of networks of mediators and local infrastructure for mediation.

Furthermore, the Security Council should promote, within the framework of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, cooperation between our Organization and regional and subregional organizations in conflict prevention and resolution through mediation.

It is important to recall the essential role that regional and subregional organizations play in facilitating mediation mechanisms through their specific approaches derived from their geographical, cultural and historical proximity to particular local conflict situations, as well as through the information they can provide on them within their mandates. It is critical to include those entities in the prevention and resolution of such conflicts before opting for unilateral actions by actors outside the region that, instead of facilitating the resolution of disputes, only undermine or adversely affect efforts to reach a peaceful solution. In that regard, we welcome regional initiatives for the establishment of so-called groups of friends that, being familiar with the reality of the conflict and the parties concerned, enable dialogue and create windows of opportunity to prevent the escalation of conflicts or to promote the easing of violence through their good offices.

Finally, we encourage the Secretary-General to continue his work on mediation and good offices, in accordance with the Charter and the relevant resolutions of the United Nations. His active participation in mediation processes, as well as in the appointment of United Nations envoys and special representatives, should always be seen as an opportunity to bring the parties to the negotiating table and to dialogue. In that regard, we welcome the establishment of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. We believe that space should be representative of the Organization and should incorporate a gender perspective.

Ms. Wronecka (Poland): At the outset, let me thank the Secretary-General, as well as The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem, for their valuable briefings. I would also like to express our appreciation to the presidency for choosing the topic of today's debate, as the last formal debate on mediation in the Security Council took place in April 2009 (see S/PV.6108). It is high time for the Council to take stock of recent developments in this arena.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General and the Mediation Support Unit for their efforts in promoting mediation as the most costeffective method of conflict resolution. Conflict prevention and crisis management through mediation are one of the founding principles of the United Nations, and we cannot underemphasize its significance to our work in the Council. We need to take all possible steps to further enhance the mediation capacity of the Organization.

We live in a world of multifaceted challenges to peace and stability that involve a countless number of actors. The United Nations cannot always be expected to fulfil its role in safeguarding international peace and security by itself. Regional organizations, individual Member States and even non-governmental entities have important and, at times, essential contributions to make, depending on the specific features of the conflict in question.

Mediation is based on the concept of restorative justice. It is worth mentioning that one of precursors and pioneers of that concept was Polish lawyer and sociologist Leon Petrazycki, whose work dates back to the 1930s. The founding fathers of the United Nations had high hopes for mediation as a method for resolving conflicts — they resonate in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. In that regard, we would like to highlight once again the great job that the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) is doing by, among other things, holding annual conflict prevention dialogues with the European Union.

We recognize that the United Nations has the right tools to advance mediation, such as the Mediation Support Unit, the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers and the recently established High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. We have already seen the first results of successfully conducted negotiations by a member of the Advisory Board in the case of Liberia's presidential election.

The Security Council in its configuration has already adopted numerous documents mentioning mediation. Let me draw the Council's attention to one particular presidential statement on conflict prevention, adopted in January (S/PRST/2018/1), where we recalled that a comprehensive conflict prevention strategy should include early warning, preventive deployment

and mediation, and recognized that those components are interdependent and complementary.

During the most recent Security Council debate on mediation (see S/PV.6108), Council members mentioned, among others, the successful examples of Togo and Somalia. Today we are pleased to refer also to the case of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and its efforts to peacefully resolve the name issue with the Republic of Greece. Agreements signed by the leaders from both sides would not have been possible without vast mediation efforts.

One excellent example of civil society mediation efforts are the activities of the Community of Sant'Egidio, a highly regarded Christian membership organization based in Rome, which has been focusing on conflict prevention and resolution, primarily in Africa, for the past 30 years. DPA has been working with Sant'Egidio since its first success — brokering peace in the Mozambique civil war in 1992. Its work is the definition of model mediation efforts: independent, neutral, confidential and focused mostly on poor countries.

It is crucial to involve civil society, including women's groups, in the design, implementation and monitoring of any peace agreement. The protection of women leaders at risk of targeted political violence should also remain high among peace supporters' priorities. They are ready to support the mediators and facilitators following standards of inclusive mediation.

Women-led prevention initiatives have helped to prevent and mitigate the escalation of violence many times by engaging in constructive dialogue and peace advocacy. Evidence shows that security efforts are more successful and sustainable when women contribute to prevention and early warning, post-conflict resolution and rebuilding. It is unfortunate that women's representation in mediation and conflict-prevention efforts has grown only marginally in the 18 years since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000).

Women's central roles in many families and communities afford them a unique vantage point for recognizing unusual patterns of behaviour and signs of impending conflict, such as arms mobilization and weapons caching. Women are often best positioned to detect early signs of radicalization because their rights and physical integrity are often the first targets of fundamentalists. Evidence shows that women make unique and substantive contributions that improve the effectiveness of peace operations.

We should also respond to the calls to establish a system to enhance the financing of mediation and prevention efforts. Poland supports those efforts with donations to DPA's multi-year appeal, and we would encourage others to do so as well. Those resources are vital for the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, for example, which helps to monitor the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace.

Today, we need more effective mediation that gives the parties to the conflict a sense of satisfaction. What makes mediation effective? An essential condition for successful mediation is the establishment of relations with the parties to the conflict. To gain their trust and confidence, the rapport must be genuine and partners must feel that their interests are fully understood. No party should ever expect to walk away from a mediation process with everything they wanted. By making sure partners understand the pros and cons of the mediation process, sides can often gain a greater sense of satisfaction and both sides can win.

Mrs. Gueguen (France) (*spoke in French*): Mediation is a clear demonstration of the increased power of diplomacy for peace, as the Secretary-General has said. That is a cornerstone our Organization and a key part of the Security Council's duty to maintain international peace and security.

The United Nations is the forum for great mediators. Therefore, I would like to pay tribute to Kofi Annan for his work as Secretary-General and as mediator in several crises — notably, in Kenya, Syria and Burma. He was the embodiment of a good listener, impartiality and personal authority, which are indispensable for a mediator. He knew how to achieve the key to successful mediation: establishing unity where there are divisions and a common framework that expands stakeholders' outlook in order to overcome conflicts and free them from the prison of binary win-lose logic and zero-sum games.

Mediation is one of the essential tools provided by Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations for the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Gambia and Colombia are recent success stories that underscore the usefulness of that tool in conflict prevention, management and resolution.

In that context, France fully endorses the Secretary-General's vision, according to which we must be collectively more effective in preventing the emergence and deterioration of crisis situations. France therefore welcomes the efforts the Secretary-General has made to strengthen the mediation capacities of the United Nations, namely, through the establishment of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation in September 2017. France also welcomes the other measures that have been taken in recent years, such as the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit and the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers and the development of United Nations Guidance for Effective Mediation.

The United Nations plays a key mediation role in many crisis situations today. I have in mind in particular the cases of Syria, Yemen and Libya, where United Nations representatives are directly responsible for conflict resolution processes. I would also mention Mali, the Central African Republic, Iraq, Colombia and West Africa, where the special representatives of the Secretary-General and regional offices are playing a crucial role through their good offices.

Despite that progress and the indispensable role played by the United Nations, the increased number of conflicts in the world and the increasing complexity and global nature of conflicts make mediation efforts much more complex. In Mali, for example, the implementation of the Agreement on Peace and Reconciliation in Mali, with the support of international mediation, is facing both obstruction by criminal and terrorist groups and difficulties encountered by the various parties in joining their efforts to develop solutions to the crisis.

Elsewhere, mediation efforts are too often hampered by political or ideological positions that limit mediators' room for manoeuvre. The lack of political will and ownership by stakeholders is also a major challenge for mediation processes.

Finally, global challenges are now a potential source of increased conflict that cannot be ignored. I would mention climate change, which is exacerbating traditional sources of conflict, as evidenced, for example, by the tensions between breeders and farmers in West and Central Africa.

Against that backdrop, the Security Council must, more than ever, redouble its efforts to support ongoing mediation efforts. As I mentioned earlier, the Security Council itself has entrusted the United Nations with the responsibility for managing the political processes in Syria, Yemen and Libya. However, those political processes can succeed only if the Security Council is united in supporting the United Nations mediators and if its members remove certain political or ideological obstacles that undermine such processes.

In that context, France reiterates its full support to the United Nations mediators. In Syria, after years of bloody conflict, today hope lies in the political process launched by Special Envoy Staffan de Mistura in Geneva, the only forum in a position to achieve a negotiated political solution in line with resolution 2254 (2015). In Yemen, France also fully supports the efforts of Special Envoy Martin Griffiths and the holding on 6 September of the Geneva conference with all the parties. Lastly, in Libya, France reiterates its full support to Special Representative Ghassan Salamé and his appeal to the parties to meet the commitments made in Paris last June.

Apart from the unity of the Security Council, other elements seem essential to the success of mediation initiatives. In particular, it concerns their inclusiveness, especially the effective participation of women in all stages of the political process, which is an essential prerequisite for ensuring the emergence of lasting peace. It is also a matter of working with civil society and all those that support non-violence in society in order to fully benefit from the tremendous momentum in serving peace that they represent, be they young people, professional organizations or religious leaders.

The effectiveness of mediation efforts can also be enhanced by strengthening the links and coordination between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations. The latter bring the United Nations close to the field and an in-depth knowledge of the local environment.

Finally, today it seems to be necessary to further increase our ability to anticipate crises by strengthening early-warning mechanisms, but also by using preventive diplomacy. Preventing a conflict rather than having to resolve it must be a priority, and the case of the Gambia is an example to follow. The joint efforts of the United Nations, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States made it possible to prevent the post-electoral crisis from turning into a conflict, whose main victim would have been the people.

I will conclude my statement by emphasizing that, while mediation is an essential element of

crisis prevention and resolution, it must of course be supported by the promotion of respect for international law, in particular human rights law and international humanitarian law, and recourse to international justice and arbitration. International law remains an enduring linchpin of the multilateral order and an essential instrument for preventing or resolving crises and for restoring peace.

Mr. Van Oosterom (Netherlands): I would first like to thank the Secretary-General, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Qadeem for their impressive and inspiring briefings. Let me also thank you personally, Mr. Minister, for convening and presiding over this important debate.

I align myself with the statement to be made by the observer of the European Union.

The Secretary-General emphasized the responsibility of all Member States to seize opportunities for mediation in order to prevent or manage conflict and to build and sustain peace. In that light, today I will focus on three specific points: first, the role of the Security Council in that context; secondly, the importance of inclusivity in mediation; and, thirdly, the relevance of mediation in all phases of the conflict cycle.

On my first point, the role of the Security Council under the Charter of the United Nations, as set out in Article 33 of the Charter, on the pacific settlement of disputes, the Security Council has a responsibility to resolve and to prevent conflicts. An important instrument in that context is mediation, and we commend the Secretary-General for making that his priority. As the nature of conflicts changes, the Security Council and the United Nations need to find new approaches to address new challenges. Let me highlight examples such as Mali, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and, especially, Syria, where civil wars rage and non-State actors play decisive roles. Those examples demonstrate that we require an adaptation of the existing instruments.

The international community is struggling to meet such challenges. That often results in a wide array of mediation initiatives by States and by non-governmental organizations. What is lacking is coordination. In many cases, the United Nations is well placed to provide that coordination with an ambition to build sustainable peace. The Council has its own role to play in supporting the efforts of the United Nations. However, the Council needs early warning to take early action, and we appreciate the Secretariat's ongoing efforts for more proactive reporting. While it is the Council's role to support the use of mediation and other tools mentioned in the Charter, we encourage the use of such tools before situations become a threat to international peace and security. That may benefit situations such as those in Cameroon and Nicaragua.

On my second point, the importance of inclusive mediation strategies, an inclusive approach ensures the involvement of all stakeholders, allowing civil society representatives, for example, to reach out to communities and to convey grievances. A good example of that is the Bangui Forum on National Reconciliation, which pulled the Central African Republic back from the brink of conflict.

As other speakers have done, let me also focus on the specific role of women. Resolution 1325 (2000) not only recognizes the effects of conflict on women but also refers particularly to the essential contribution of women in peacebuilding. Women must be equal partners in peace processes, particularly in mediation efforts. Examples of effective efforts include the Mediterranean Women Mediation Network, FemWise and the Nordic Women Mediator's Network, and we pay tribute to those initiatives. We encourage the United Nations to seek active cooperation with networks such as those, as well as to appoint more women as envoys.

On my third point, let me emphasize the importance of using mediation throughout the conflict cycle and of integrating it in the sustaining peace agenda. Successful mediation prevents the escalation of violence and helps to avert mass atrocity crimes. In addition, mediation efforts must go further than finding compromise among the parties. They must lead to solutions that are in line with international law, accountability and transitional justice. In our view, the involvement of relevant actors such as the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, religious leaders and organizations is key. The mediation in the Gambia in 2016 and 2017 as part of the joint effort of ECOWAS, the AU and the United Nations is a good example of successful collaboration for mediation.

As has been said, mediation is key to prevention. To quote the Secretary-General, the television cameras

are not there when a crisis is avoided. Prevention takes place under the radar and is discreet. Unfortunately, it is therefore often forgotten. Because it is forgotten, it is underfunded. Prevention is at the core of the work of the United Nations, and currently it is funded by voluntary contributions. The Kingdom of the Netherlands is a long-term donor in that field and will continue to be so. However, what we need is assessed contributions for sustainable prevention action by the Secretary-General.

Moving forward, we must live up to the commitments stipulated in the Charter of the United Nations. We must ensure that mediation processes are inclusive. We must prioritize prevention and use tools such as mediation, address root causes and fund the mediation efforts of the Secretary-General properly.

In conclusion, there are no quick fixes to the conflicts that define our generation. We must continue to support the Secretary-General and the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation in the efforts to expand mediation work in the context of prevention and of sustaining peace. Enhancing the capacity of the United Nations is key to the prevention agenda. It is our joint responsibility to help the Secretary-General to realize his priority.

Mr. Meza-Cuadra (Peru) (*spoke in Spanish*): We would like to welcome the initiative of the United Kingdom to convene this open debate, and especially your participation, Mr. Minister. We appreciate the important briefings by the Secretary-General, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem.

Given the increasing complexity of global challenges, Peru believes that it is of the utmost importance to strengthen multilateralism and to revitalize the United Nations in order to make it more coherent, effective and efficient in supporting the efforts of Member States to achieve a sustainable peace. We therefore support the leadership and reforms promoted by the Secretary-General. We encourage him to continue to do so in line with the functions conferred upon him by the Charter of the United Nations and the principle of the peaceful dispute settlement. In particular, among the provisions listed in Chapter VI, we underscore the validity and relevance of mediation for effective preventive diplomacy, at all levels of human interaction, before, during and after conflict.

From a legal perspective, we would like to recall that, in its original codification, in The Hague Conventions of 1899 and 1907, international mediation, together with so-called good offices, transcends the establishment of contact between the parties and the organizational aspects of facilitating a negotiation. Mediators are called upon to guide a negotiation to its conclusion, which implies respect for the sensitivities of the parties, including those related to the sovereignty of States, since it requires their consent at all times.

Mediation is mandated by the parties, which, in turn, must be in accordance with applicable international law, including international humanitarian law and international human rights law, as well as the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. Special Envoys of the Secretary-General and other United Nations representatives normally involved in mediation have a special responsibility to guide the parties to a dispute or conflict towards solutions consistent with the functioning of a rules-based international system. In no case can the exercise of that responsibility be considered unfriendly. On the contrary, recourse to mediation by a trained representative of the United Nations or other specialized agencies is very valuable to any legal entity interested in peacefully resolving a dispute.

We highlight the establishment of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Mediation and the important role played by former President Olusegun Obasanjo of Nigeria, one of its members, in supporting the political process in Liberia during the presidential elections held last December. In that regard, Peru encourages the Council to play a more active role in its work, by promoting and supporting the use of mediation and other peaceful means of dispute settlement provided for in the Charter of the United Nations. We believe that it is vital for achieving peaceful solutions to major conflicts, such as those in Syria and Yemen. The respective Special Envoys of the Secretary-General, Mr. Staffan de Mistura and Mr. Martin Griffiths, have the unanimous support of the Council in their efforts to bring the relevant parties together. We also believe that the changing nature of contemporary conflicts calls for the strengthening and deployment of regional, subregional, national and local capacities to resolve them peacefully in an inclusive manner, including specific mediation capacities.

In that regard, we would like to highlight the important role that the African Union and other regional and subregional organizations continue to play in coordination with the United Nations system, and with

the Council in particular. For example, we recognize the important mediating role of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in the conflict in South Sudan. However, we underscore the need for the international community, in cooperation with such organizations and civil society, to promote more actively the building and strengthening of mediation capacities. We also stress the importance of a comprehensive approach to conflict, under which mediation can, as appropriate, be complemented by other tools and capacities, in particular for early warning and prevention.

Peacekeeping operations and, in general, peace missions deployed under the mandate of the Council, in line with peacebuilding efforts in conflict-affected countries, should be receive adequate training to enable them to mediate and promote national capacities as part of their exit strategies.

In conclusion, I emphasize the importance of promoting, at all levels, greater women's leadership and participation in mediation processes. That means, inter alia, increased resources for training, in line with resolution 2242 (2015), on women and peace and security.

Mr. Umarov (Kazakhstan): At the outset, the delegation of Kazakhstan would like to thank the presidency of the United Kingdom for convening today's timely debate, which provides a good opportunity to discuss how to strengthen the role of the United Nations and the Security Council in mediation and the settlement of disputes. We express appreciation to Secretary-General Guterres for his insightful briefing and commend his determined efforts to enhance the mediation capabilities of the United Nations. We would also like to thank The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and civil-society briefer Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for their enlightening interventions.

As one of the most representative and authoritative international organizations in the world, the United Nations has every right to play a central role in mediation and dispute settlement. As the highest United Nations organ entrusted with the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security, the Security Council has a vital role in promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes, including and especially by means of mediation.

A regional United Nations presence is an effective tool for mediating disputes at the disposal of the Security Council. In that regard, my delegation would like to recognize the important and valuable role of the United Nations Regional Centre for Preventive Diplomacy for Central Asia (UNRCCA). UNRCCA's activities certainly contribute to the goal of stability by implementing measures to prevent destabilization in Central Asia, which can be caused by various factors, including the situation in Afghanistan. Likewise, Kazakhstan has witnessed the successful mediation efforts of the United Nations Office for West Africa and Sahel (UNOWAS), led by Special Representative of the Secretary-General Chambas, in the Gambia, during the critical moment of transition in January 2017. Together with regional leaders and subregional organizations, namely the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the United Nations was able to ensure the peaceful and orderly transfer of power to President Adama Barrow. We commend the efforts of UNOWAS and all other partners that supported the mediation efforts.

Regional organizations are particularly important actors in mediation, as indicated in Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations. Kazakhstan founded the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-Building Measures in Asia as an intergovernmental forum to promote peace, security and stability in Asia, and, through that, in other continents. Other regional and subregional organizations, such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the African Union, ECOWAS, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, have accumulated significant mediation experience. In that regard, it is of the utmost importance to promote close collaboration and partnership between the United Nations and regional organizations in order to seek timely and successful resolutions of conflicts. Given the limitations of the United Nations, cooperation with regional organizations should be further strengthened. We are convinced that the regional approach in which challenges are addressed in a more focused and coordinated manner is a very useful tool for enhancing the capabilities of the United Nations and regional organizations in mediation and dispute settlement. We must also work on enhancing the national and local mediation capacities of the various stakeholders.

As very eloquently stated earlier today by the Secretary-General and our briefers, mediation and peace processes should seek to increase the meaningful

participation of women, especially at decision-making levels, as well as religious groups and youth, as they could bring fresh ideas and push for peace and effective dialogue.

Kazakhstan has always been in favour of peaceful dispute-settlement processes. We are of the view that the main tool for resolving all disputes between States should be peaceful dialogue and constructive negotiations, on the basis of equal responsibility for peace and security, mutual respect and non-interference in domestic affairs. With that in mind, Kazakhstan has been hosting peace talks on Syria and the Iran nuclear deal, acting as an honest broker and unbiased bridge-builder.

My delegation can only agree with the words and vision of the Archbishop of Canterbury when he spoke so clearly about the role of religious organizations in mediation and pre-emptive reconciliation. For that reason, Kazakhstan, for the last 15 years since 2003, has hosted a congress of religious leaders of world and traditional religions, with wide participation by representatives of different faiths. This year in particular, on 10 and 11 October, we will hold the next forum in Astana under the theme "Religious leaders for a safe world", devoted to the very subject we are discussing today, as the Archbishop referred to. Religious delegations from 74 countries have already confirmed their participation in the forum, and we are ready to join hands with everyone else, any organization or stakeholder, to step up our collective efforts in mediation and reconciliation.

During its presidency of the Security Council in January, Kazakhstan, based on its own experience and record, focused on preventive diplomacy, conflict prevention and mediation as important tools to deal with the complex issues on our agenda. We consistently stressed the importance of political will and trust-building in achieving peace and stability in the world. In that vein, as outlined in the concept note for this debate (S/2018/586, annex), the Security Council adopted a presidential statement (PRST/2018/1) during our presidency. The document highlighted the importance of mediation as a tool for conflict prevention and encouraged the Secretary-General to enhance the use of his good offices, dispatching representatives, Special Envoys and mediators to help facilitate durable, inclusive and comprehensive settlements. Kazakhstan continues to be engaged in that work and in endeavouring to find further ways whereby the Security Council and the United Nations can effectively tackle the issues of mediation, reconciliation and dispute settlement of conflicts.

Mr. Alotaibi (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express our appreciation and thanks to the United Kingdom for convening this meeting and for the good preparation of the concept note (S/2018/586, annex). I would like also to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations for his briefing, and I welcome The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Qadeem and thank them for participating in this meeting and for their extensive briefings on the role of mediation and settlement of disputes.

I would like to quote the Holy Qur'an on the role of mediation, which emphasizes the importance of mediation and urges to undertake it since 1,400 years ago.

> "If two parties among the believers fall into a fight, make ye peace between them. But if one of them transgresses beyond bounds against the other, then fight ye against the one that transgresses until he complies with the command of Allah. But if he complies, then make peace between them with justice and be fair, for Allah loves those who are fair and just." (*The Holy Qur'an, XLIX:9*)

It is unfortunate that we are currently grappling with a great number of wars and conflicts even after the creation of the United Nations, which was founded in the first place to prevent the recurrence of conflicts. However, we are unfortunately seeing an increase in the number of conflicts with a difference in nature and severity.

There is no doubt that the settlement of disputes through mediation is a civilized means to settle international conflicts through targeted and constructive dialogue sponsored by the mediators. If the parties agree to participate in such a beneficial and constructive dialogue, it is a sign of their civilized nature.

Considering the history of international mediation, we can notice that mediation has gone through different stages and was institutionalized in the twentieth century through The Hague Convention of 1907. With the creation of the United Nations, Chapter VI, Article 33, of the Charter has enabled the United Nations to set a clear definition of mediation, especially through the mediation guidelines issued in 2012. The Council must

focus more on the issue of mediation. It is unfortunate that the Council is yet to give more attention to one of the best means for the peaceful settlement of conflicts, especially that the last time the Council discussed mediation, its successes, failures and shortcomings was in 2009 (see S/PV.6108). The only outcome back then was a single presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/8).

Kuwait welcomes the call by the Secretary-General for the Council to use and resort to Chapter VI of the Charter in a better way. Since coming to office in January 2017, the Secretary-General has focused on preventive diplomacy through good offices and building mediation capacity. He has underscored the importance of mediation and its promotion in order to reach the ultimate goal, namely, either to contain and end conflicts or to settle conflicts before they break out.

The Secretary-General translated his words into action by creating the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation to employ good offices and to reach peaceful settlement of disputes. We agree with what the Secretary-General said in his briefing today that prevention must be a priority. That is in line with a famous and common proverb that holds that an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

It is unacceptable for the United Nations to spend billions of dollars on containing and managing conflicts by deploying peacekeeping operations, while spending too little on mediation and prevention means. Logic and the Charter call on us to focus on Chapter VI before resorting to Chapter VII. Therefore, we welcome the good offices of the Secretary-General and the efforts of the United Nations Secretariat.

We call on the Secretary-General to pursue his good offices in line with the Charter and the Council's resolutions, and to provide support as appropriate to his special envoys and representatives in the field of mediation as well as to Member States and regional and subregional organizations upon their request, with emphasis on the content of the Secretary-General's reports on the prevention of armed conflict.

Conflict prevention and strengthening mediation are dependent on a number of factors, including building the capacity of regional partners, promoting national capacity in the field of mediation and dialogue, women's participation and ensuring funds and resources.

In conclusion, we reiterate the importance of the Security Council paying more attention to mediation in the area of conflict settlement, while also giving regional and subregional organizations a greater role in mediation, in line with their mandate and according to Chapter VIII of the Charter. That can be done by strengthening strategic partnerships and ensuring synergy, coordination and complementarity in mediation. In order to ensure successful and effective mediation, a number of elements have to be in place, most important of which is admitting that mediation requires concerted efforts and coordination so as to be effective.

Mr. Orrenius Skau (Sweden): Let me start by thanking you, Mr. President, for this important opportunity to discuss how to strengthen the role of mediation. I also want to thank the briefers for their insightful and very useful input to this discussion today.

In January 2017, the Secretary-General presented his vision for a surge in diplomacy to the Council in an open debate organized under the Swedish presidency (see S/PV.7857). That vision is well on its way to being realized and should be actively supported by all Member States. We commend the diplomatic efforts of the Secretary-General and his envoys and special representatives in actively using his good offices to defuse tensions and resolve conflicts, often behind the scenes, with quiet diplomacy. The Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation are also making important contributions to those efforts. Recently, we saw the crafting of an agreement between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and the successful role of the Advisory Board on Mediation in the holding of Liberian elections through the deployment of President Obasanjo, as the Secretary-General mentioned earlier. We continue to encourage a flexible and proactive use of the Advisory Board.

United Nations diplomatic work concerning the peaceful settlement of disputes and international peace and security must have the full support of the Council, as well as adequate and predictable funding under the regular budget. International law provides a common basis for addressing the root causes of conflicts, such as the violation of human rights and international humanitarian law, justice and inequalities. Although significant progress has been made to strengthen the capacity for mediation, allow me to highlight three areas where we believe that further efforts are needed.

First, there is the matter of gender mainstreaming and women's participation in mediation. I am happy to note that, regarding that issue, there appears to be a resounding consensus at today's meeting. In that regard, let me thank Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for her thoughtful contribution to today's open debate. It is not a women's issue, but a peace and security issue. Women's participation is not a box that can be checked off by adding one or two women to negotiation teams, or by creating a separate mechanism in which women have only an advisory role. Women and men must participate on equal terms at all levels of political and peace processes. More women should be appointed as United Nations Special Envoys and senior members of mediation teams. Member States must make that possible by nominating more women candidates. The Swedish Women's Mediation Network was launched in 2015 for that purpose, and there are now several women's mediation networks, as the Secretary-General mentioned. Mediation support teams must also have adequate gender expertise to understand how women's rights are part of the issues under discussion.

Secondly, concerning inclusivity and multitrack diplomacy, as the Archbishop stressed earlier, mediation should be inclusive so as to consider the needs of all segments of society. The participation of local communities and civil society, including youth organizations, in peace and mediation processes is essential for solutions to take root and must be given higher priority. Therefore, mediation capacity must also be strengthened at the national and local levels. Regional and subregional organizations play a crucial role in anticipating conflict risks by responding quickly, providing robust expertise and establishing relationships for effective mediation. Examples include the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States to ensure the peaceful and democratic transition in The Gambia last year and the continued efforts of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development in South Sudan. Regional United Nations offices are critical to support and complement regional efforts.

Thirdly, and perhaps most important, with regard to international unity, the Council must stand united in supporting United Nations mediation efforts, while providing envoys and mediation teams with the leverage that they need to succeed, especially in situations that are politically complex. Regrettably, too often divisions within the Council add to the challenges a United Nations mediator must overcome to succeed. Furthermore, there are also situations outside of the Council's regular agenda that require preventive diplomacy and mediation support. Cameroon, Nicaragua, Papua New Guinea and Madagascar illustrate such current situations. In order to be responsive with mediation when needed, the Security Council requires additional briefings and reporting on early warning and looming conflicts, including on human rights violations. The Council also must follow through on mediation efforts throughout the conflict cycle and not relent until durable peace has been achieved. To that end, agreement, not least among Council members, on the urgency to do better in preventing conflict is needed.

Sweden will continue supporting mediation efforts politically and through predictable funding to funds and programmes, as well as supporting the DPA through the Folke Bernadotte Academy by providing training and capacity-building. We will also continue to work towards achieving unity of purpose in the Council in support of the Secretary-General and his representatives in their respective mediation efforts to manage and prevent conflict. That is the duty of the Council as set out in the Charter of the United Nations.

Mr. Wu Haitao (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China welcomes you, Sir, to New York to preside over this open debate. I thank Secretary-General Guterres for his briefing. China has listened carefully to the statements by the Archbishop of Canterbury and Ms. Qadeem.

At present, although the international environment is stable overall, the landscape is dotted with hotspot issues that involve complex, historical, territorial, religious and ethnic factors. Traditional and non-traditional security threats are interconnected. We are meeting at a time when the Secretary-General is actively promoting the reform of the United Nations peace and security architecture, which prioritizes preventive diplomacy. Against such a backdrop, it is of critical importance for the Security Council to spotlight mediation and the settlement of disputes. The Charter of the United Nations calls for the peaceful settlement of disputes through political and diplomatic means. It is also the best approach to achieve the long-term settlement of hotspot issues. Chapter I of the Charter clearly states that the purpose of the United Nations is to maintain international peace and security and to bring about by peaceful means adjustment or settlement of international disputes or situations. Chapter VI states that mediation is one of the tools for the peaceful settlement of disputes, and that it is also an

important means for the prevention and the resolution of conflict. The international community therefore should strengthen preventive diplomacy and support relevant United Nations work in the area of mediation. I would like to make the following comments.

First, it is necessary to adhere to the purposes and principles of the Charter. The maintenance of international peace and security is the central purpose of the Charter. It is also the primary responsibility of the Security Council. The United Nations should play a central role in the prevention of conflict and strengthen its mediation activities by fully availing itself of Chapter VI. The relevant mediation work should be based on respect for national sovereignty and non-interference in the internal affairs of others. The consent of the parties concerned must be secured beforehand, and their will must be fully respected.

Secondly, the goal should be to achieve cooperation and ensure that every party has something to gain during the mediation process. Mediators and the parties to conflict should embrace a vision of a shared future for humankind and espouse a new security concept that is shared, comprehensive, cooperative and sustainable. It is important for the parties to tackle difficult security issues through dialogue and negotiations, while working in a manner to achieve mutual benefits and cooperation. It is essential to accommodate and respect each party's security concerns and the right to agree to disagree so as to find a peaceful settlement to disputes and jointly build a secure world.

Thirdly, it is necessary to strengthen cooperation and work in synergy. As the most universal, representative and authoritative international organization, it incumbent on the United Nations to play a vital role in the peaceful settlement of disputes. The Security Council, as the core of the international collective security system, should be actively engaged in the peaceful settlement of disputes through political and diplomatic means and provide political support for, and the guidance to, such work and activities. It is important for the United Nations to fully use the unique influence of the Secretary-General and the highly professional nature of the Secretariat to mediate disputes through the deployment of the Secretary-General's special representatives and envoys. Regional organizations such as the African Union enjoy unique advantages when mediating disputes in their regions, and should receive more support for their roles in this area.

Fourthly, an integrated approach with an eye for the long term is essential. Rather than focusing merely on immediate concerns, mediation should include conflict-prevention, peacekeeping, peacebuilding and long-term-development efforts. We must take a targeted approach to formulating and implementing plans for mediation by combining various means and methods. Peace and development complement each other, so we should implement the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and establish a vision for global governance based on shared discussion, joint efforts and mutual benefits. We must also help developing countries to enhance their ability to achieve self-development so that we can achieve development for all and promote durable peace.

China is a builder and defender of world peace. We uphold the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations and support the Organization in playing an important role in international affairs, for example by promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes through dialogue and negotiations and building new international relationships with cooperation and a win-win mindset at their core. In the past few years China has participated actively in mediating international and regional hotspot issues and in related political processes. We have offered solutions and promoted the establishment of various mechanisms, playing an important role in resolving problems such as the nuclear issue in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea through political and diplomatic means.

The Chinese Government has appointed special envoys for East Africa and the Middle East who have visited relevant crisis areas, participated in international conferences, taken part in international mediation efforts and encouraged the parties involved in such crises to engage in negotiation and consultation with positive outcomes. Through the China-United Nations Peace and Development Fund, we have supported various mediation mechanisms, including the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. Together with the rest of the international community, we are ready to continue to mediate disputes and conflicts in order to contribute more effectively to the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the United Kingdom presidency for organizing today's meeting and would like to thank the Secretary-General, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Ms. Qadeem for their briefings.

The peaceful resolution of conflicts is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations as both a founding purpose and a principle of the Organization's work. Beyond that, mediation has the potential to be one of the most effective means we have for preventing the escalation or resumption of conflicts as well as their resolution. There can be no question that from an economic point of view mediation is greatly preferable to other instruments in the United Nations arsenal such as peacekeeping or Security Council sanctions, as it does not create obstacles to development. As the most authoritative and representative organization in existence, the United Nations has every opportunity to play a central role in international mediation efforts, which should be undertaken in accordance with the provisions of the Charter and take into account the fundamental principles of national responsibility and respect for States' independence, sovereignty and equality in international relations.

Besides that, it is essential that we take into account the potential role of regional and subregional organizations in resolving disputes in their regions. It is their mediators' deep knowledge and understanding of every nuance of a conflict that enables them to analyse a situation more accurately and therefore to put forward objective, realistic proposals for bringing the parties closer together. The use of regional bodies and agreements for the purpose of the peaceful settlement of conflicts is an important mechanism provided for in Article 33 of the Charter. In turn, Chapter VIII of the Charter encourages Member States to prioritize the settlement of so-called local disputes with the help of such bodies and agreements before handing them over to the Security Council.

There are some regional organizations, such as the African Union, that have by now accumulated a good deal of experience in the area of mediation, which the United Nations should rely on and, where appropriate, should use to approach mediation issues based on a sensible division of labour with regional and subregional entities. In that context, we want to point to the enormous potential for the United Nations of cooperation with bodies such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the Collective Security Treaty Organization. Russia itself participates in mediation efforts within the framework of both international and regional organizations, including the Commonwealth of Independent States. However, it is crucial to ensure coordination at the international level in order to avoid any duplication of effort when various mediation efforts end up competing with one another to the ultimate detriment of the settlement of a conflict.

As the United Nations organ entrusted with the primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council is called on to play a central role in the peaceful settlement of disputes, including by encouraging the use of good offices in mediation, which is why it seriously values and supports the Secretary-General's efforts, including by backing his nominations of envoys and mediators.

It is important to understand that, ultimately, the most effective way of resolving conflicts is through direct dialogue between the conflicting parties and the political will needed to find mutually acceptable solutions. In turn, the effectiveness of mediation depends entirely on all the parties to a conflict agreeing to such international efforts and, of course, on the impartiality of the mediators. Unfortunately, we have seen plenty of examples of mediation that are simply not worthy of the name, because they are either attempts to monopolize the mediation efforts or to pursue one's own geopolitical ends in the guise of mediation.

Mediators' work is not an all-purpose art form but is rather based on a knowledge of the historical, cultural and other peculiarities of a specific conflict. Every unique situation requires patient efforts to find its individual solution. There are times when we cannot measure the success of mediation efforts in the short term. It is vital to allow the parties to come up with their own solutions, and that can be a lengthy process. In that regard, it is essential to select United Nations mediators carefully, based on objective criteria, while being sure to maintain a strict regional balance. A mediator's main task is to encourage the parties to resolve disputes and to identify the root causes obstructing a settlement. That is the only approach that can guarantee a reliable, long-lasting peace. Mediators should never impose unilateral solutions or give grounds for being suspected of bias. Artificially imposed recipes are not only ineffective but can also jeopardize a negotiation process and a fragile peace. In that regard, it is critical that United Nations mediators have the ability not just to be impartial but to maintain neutrality, which means that references to any principles, whatever they may be, should not serve as an excuse for indulging one of the sides to a conflict, or the mediators will not gain the parties' trust. Incidentally, we think that a correction

to that effect should be made in the United Nations Guidance for Effective Mediation.

Most crises today are internal ones, and there is a fine line between mediation efforts, preventive diplomacy and pressure on internal political processes. Unfortunately, we in the Security Council often hear proposals that basically amount to interference in the internal affairs of States and their constitutional procedures. It is no secret that people frequently want to use the Council to openly support a particular political group. How can that contribute to a settlement? All it can do is aggravate and prolong a conflict and undermine trust in the international community and the United Nations. We are all familiar with examples of that.

Russia always supports the settlement of disputes through direct dialogue between the parties. The global experience of preventing and resolving conflicts has shown clearly that only impartial mediation, based on the rapprochement of parties and on efforts to find areas of agreement and to achieve mutually acceptable agreements, has any chance of success.

Mr. Hunter (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for coming to preside over this meeting. I also thank the Secretary-General, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Ms. Qadeem for their remarks today.

The United States joins the Archbishop in honouring the memory of the late Kofi Annan on this issue. In August 2012, Mr. Annan spoke to the press about his work as Special Envoy for Syria. Reflecting on his task, he said:

> "I accepted this task, which some called 'Mission Impossible', for I believed that it was a sacred duty to do whatever was in my power to help the Syrian people find a peaceful solution to this bloody conflict."

He made real progress towards developing a peace plan. Had the parties listened to Mr. Annan at the time, hundreds of thousands of Syrians could have been saved. But after five months on the job, Annan came to a sobering realization. As he said, "You have to understand: as an envoy, I cannot want peace more than the protagonists". He stepped down, paralysed because the Al-Assad regime did not want peace, and Russia, sometimes alongside China, blocked the Security Council from stepping in.

That is the challenge with mediation. All of us know that it is vastly better to solve conflicts through talks instead of by force. All of us agree that investing in mediation and prevention is important. All of us support the efforts of the Secretary-General to build the United Nations mediation capacity. But, of course, even the world's greatest mediators have no troops at their command; they cannot impose sanctions and cannot compel people to do anything. The missing ingredient when it comes to mediation is often a real desire on the part of us, the members of the Security Council, to see those efforts succeed.

Around the world, the Security Council is quick to send out envoys and proclaim our support for them. There are United Nations-led dialogues and political processes in Yemen, Libya, Syria, Iraq, Colombia, Afghanistan and the Great Lakes, to name just a few. Those are some of the world's most daunting conflicts, and we are looking to the United Nations envoys to find solutions. But they cannot do it alone. That is why the United States has pushed the Security Council to impose real consequences when parties are not willing to negotiate. Mediators may not be able to compel people to come to the table, so we have to play that role.

In South Sudan, the Council waited years before finally imposing an arms embargo. That is a place where war has raged out of control. Government troops and other armed groups have slaughtered civilians, burned down their villages and committed unspeakable atrocities. The United States repeatedly sought to impose sanctions as a step towards holding South Sudan's leaders accountable for their actions, but we were told over and over to wait for talks to come through. Agreements and ceasefires came and went and the violence continued, but we were still told to wait to take action. In the end, we adopted an arms embargo and new sanctions last month. Now, the parties will have a new incentive to negotiate in earnest and reach a sustainable agreement that represents the needs and interests of the South Sudanese people. We do not know whether those negotiations will ultimately be successful, but we know that progress will not be possible without consequences for those who refuse to compromise for peace.

We must not let mediation blind us to the realities of what people are doing to each other on the ground. We want diplomacy to work, but when it does not, we must have the courage to say it and to pursue a meaningful response. That is how we help mediators out — by

showing the parties that there will be consequences if they do not commit to talks.

The United States has also made it a priority to push for political progress in places that have long been on our agenda. In situations like those in Cyprus and Western Sahara, we have peacekeeping missions that have sat on the ground for decades. In theory, those missions support political solutions, but in reality, they are perpetuating a status quo. The United States is going back to those legacy peacekeeping missions and asking hard questions about what we are achieving. We are making a renewed push to see whether the parties are working with the United Nations to make political progress and, if they are not, we are going to reassess what those missions are doing. Either way, we do mediators no favours when we let the status quo be an end in itself.

The United Nations can never walk away from mediation. Even in the worst of circumstances, we look to the United Nations and its mediators to keep trying to find a way out of conflict. That is the fundamental purpose of the Organization. For mediators, talk can be powerful, but for the Security Council, talk is cheap. It is easy for us to express support for mediation, but it is only when we actually empower mediators and use the tools that we have to push parties back to the table that we can expect to see results.

The President: May I remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

As a reminder, flashing lights on the collars of the microphones will prompt speakers to bring their remarks to a close after four minutes. If speakers have not concluded one minute later, the presidency will intervene and ask them to conclude. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the text in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I also wish to inform all concerned that we will be carrying on this open debate through the lunch hour, as we have a long list of speakers.

I now give the floor to the representative of Brazil.

Mr. Vieira (Brazil): I would like to thank the United Kingdom for convening this open debate. Brazil highly appreciates the topic chosen for this meeting of the Security Council. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and also commend tThe Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for their briefings.

It has been too long since the Security Council last convened an open debate on mediation — a critical part of our toolbox for conflict prevention and settlement. While it is true that mediation has been gaining increased attention at the United Nations, especially as a component of the surge in diplomacy for peace, called for by the Secretary-General, there is much more that the Council could do to support it.

Brazil aligns itself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the Group of Friends of Mediation, in which we have been proud to participate since its creation.

Brazil has consistently been a supporter and a practitioner of mediation. Based on the notion of non-indifference, Brazil has, upon request, assisted several parties in settling their disputes. Our current role as guarantors of the negotiations between the Colombian Government and the Ejército de Liberación Nacional exemplifies our genuine commitment to facilitating the peaceful settlement of conflicts. The Tehran Declaration, brokered by Brazil and Turkey in 2010, on the Iranian nuclear dossier, is another example of our commitment to diplomacy and dialogue.

I take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and to voice my country's appreciation for the creation, under his leadership, of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation.

The Council has already acknowledged that mediation is an important means for the peaceful settlement of disputes. While it is useful at all stages of a dispute, it should be particularly encouraged before tension escalates into armed conflict. Once violence flares, peacemaking becomes more challenging and the human costs rise, often dramatically. In order to enhance the United Nations readiness to employ mediation, the Mediation Support Unit must count on adequate human and financial resources. The establishment of a special account for special political missions, separate from the regular budget, could free resources for mediation support.

Capacity-building is also instrumental in promoting early mediation. The United Nations should continue to support regional and subregional organizations in reinforcing their own mediation tools, as well as to assist national and local institutions. Experience

demonstrates that actors other than the United Nations can be very effective mediators and, in some cases, may stand higher chances of success. Even in cases where others may be better placed to mediate a dispute, the United Nations should still be ready to provide political and technical assistance, if needed, to those taking the lead.

Inclusivity and national ownership are key to effective mediation. More often than not, externally driven processes fail to account for all interests, lacking the roots needed to ensure long-term compliance and stability. On the other hand, bottom-up approaches that concretely involve all perspectives tend to generate more solid agreements. It may take longer to reach inclusive solutions, but they last longer.

We cannot overestimate the constructive role that women and young people can have in mediation. The situation in Guinea-Bissau provides a clear example of how gender-sensitive initiatives tend to be more successful. Last year, as Guinea-Bissau was facing a prolonged political stalemate, a group of women facilitators was able to open up lines of dialogue among actors who had not spoken to one another directly for a long time. Comprised of 10 women from different local organizations, the group proved to be an effective measure to build confidence and de-escalate tensions. Brazil's national action plan on women, peace and security incorporates that notion, as it includes actions to promote women's participation as agents of peace.

Brazil welcomes the fact that the composition of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation is gender-balanced. We would welcome more diversity, especially from a geographic perspective, when it comes to the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers of the Department of Political Affairs. Establishing longer periods for the nomination of candidates could be helpful in that regard.

As highlighted by the Secretary-General, mediation efforts require a supportive external environment. Due to its role as the primary guardian of peace and security, the Council can contribute to creating circumstances that are conducive to fruitful mediation. For example, when it firmly supports the work of Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, the Council strengthens the role of the mediator and encourages the parties to engage seriously in negotiations.

The Security Council should avoid taking decisions that could have a negative effect on credible mediation processes under way. Sanction regimes, for example, should be designed in close coordination with the mediators and those in the field. Sanctions are not an end in themselves; they must always be at the service of a political strategy aimed at promoting the peaceful settlement of a crisis.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Turkey.

Mr. Sinirlioğlu (Turkey): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Group of Friends of Mediation and its two co-Chairs, Finland and Turkey.

I would like to thank the United Kingdom for organizing this open debate and putting forward several important questions to guide the discussion. We also welcome the participation of the Secretary-General, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem in this meeting.

The Group of Friends of Mediation very much welcomes this timely debate and underlines the importance of the Security Council remaining actively engaged in conflict prevention and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, including through mediation, as foreseen in the Charter of the United Nations. That role can be used most effectively when actors are united.

The Group of Friends of Mediation today consists of 48 member States, the United Nations, seven regional organizations and other international organizations. The Group promotes and advances the use of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution, and generates support for the development of mediation. The Group of Friends has significantly contributed to increasing awareness of mediation. The Group has initiated four General Assembly resolutions to strengthen the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution, one of which encourages the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations to continue to develop their mediation capacities.

The world has changed since the previous open debate on mediation and the settlement of disputes (see S/PV.6108), in 2009. Moreover, the United Nations has changed. We welcome the Secretary-General's strong commitment to emphasizing the importance of conflict prevention and resolution, including mediation. In that regard, we welcome the establishment of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on

Mediation, which brings together an unparalleled range of experience, skills, knowledge and contacts.

In his 2017 report on United Nations activities in support of mediation (A/72/115), the Secretary-General points out the multiple activities in which the United Nations is already involved. The list is impressive, but more can be done. We need to maintain this momentum and give a further boost to the mediation agenda at the United Nations. In that respect, we would like to take this opportunity to encourage the Security Council, as well as Member States, to explore further ways to reinforce the promotion of mediation as an important means for the pacific settlement of disputes.

Conflicts are becoming more and more complex, as are their prevention and resolution. In order to achieve lasting peace, we need a comprehensive, inclusive and coordinated approach in which different actors of the international community complement each other. That includes not only the United Nations, the Security Council and Member States, but also regional, subregional and local organizations, as well as civil society. As conflicts have grown more complex and multilayered, they need to be approached on many levels, through cooperation among mediation support actors.

Inclusivity has proven to be one significant means of achieving the sustainability of peace. All members of society should play a meaningful role in peace processes. Women and young people have an exceptionally important role in that regard. Both groups have a lot to offer in building peace and resilience in their societies. It is up to all of us here to ensure that the commitments of the relevant resolutions on women and peace and security and on youth and peace and security are implemented effectively. The United Nations Guidance on Gender and Inclusive Mediation Strategies was issued to provide practical guidance to mediators and parties to conflict on increasing the meaningful participation of women and gender experts in applying gender-sensitive approaches to mediation during all phases of the peace process.

In addition, the co-Chairs of the Group of Friends of Mediation decided to dedicate this year's annual ministerial meeting of the Group to the theme of the inclusion of youth in mediation efforts. The meeting will be organized as a high-level event, open to all Member States, on Thursday, 27 September.

Building and strengthening mediation and the mediation support capacity of mediators, Member States and societies is one of the key factors for the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution, and peacebuilding. It is also important that the Security Council as well as the entire Organization strengthen their capacity to undertake prevention and recalibrate their approach from responding to conflict towards sustaining peace. Mediation should not be a closed and competitive field reserved for a few. More emphasis should be placed on mentoring the next generation and exchanging experiences with national and local mediators.

The Group of Friends of Mediation is ready to support all work and efforts in advancing diplomacy for peace and the role of mediation in this endeavour.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Egypt.

Mr. Gad (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to join other speakers who have spoken before me and to commend and thank the United Kingdom presidency of the Security Council for convening today's important debate.

The Charter of the United Nations has been the cornerstone of the global system since the end of the Second World War. That is why Egypt believes that the commitment to fully implement the provisions of the Charter, without any selectivity, is not a luxury; rather, it is one of the main guarantees of stability and the maintenance of international peace and security. Any attempt to marginalize the United Nations and to jeopardize its institutions by giving rise to unilateral initiatives would be a waste of time and a lack of respect to the Charter and the values that led to the creation of the Organization. That also undermines the international system that was agreed upon, rather than helping to develop and reform it.

On several occasions, notably during the latest conflicts that have erupted throughout the world, especially in the Middle East, history has taught us that military solutions to crises are ineffective; they have an immense human cost. The world is today witnessing a large number of humanitarian crises as a result of failure to contain conflicts. On the contrary, some parties have used those conflicts to achieve political interests or promote narrow ideologies which do not take into consideration the suffering of civilians. In that regard, Egypt underscores the pivotal role of the

United Nations in promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes and applying preventive security policies, which are considered to be the most effective and safe means — and the least costly in both human and material terms — to address threats to international peace and security.

The Security Council, in line with the mandate given to it under Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, must make all efforts to use, support and activate such peaceful means as negotiation, investigation, mediation and judicial settlement, or resort to regional bodies, organizations and other peaceful means in order to address such issues. This responsibility compels the Security Council to take decisions in an integrative context in order to support international, regional and national efforts related to the settlement of conflicts. The Council must avoid taking any measures that could undermine such efforts and wait before taking any coercive measures that might impede the solution. It should be keen to ensure the participation of relevant parties, including regional stakeholders. The Council should look into the possibility of mandating mediation to acceptable parties in order to settle the crisis early on, while applying comprehensive approaches that take the specific nature and circumstances of each conflict into consideration. This would lead to the adoption of innovative and sustainable solutions that are acceptable to the relevant parties, with the participation of all sectors of society, without exception.

On the other hand, strengthening partnership with regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union and the League of Arab States, and within an institutional framework complementary to that of the United Nations, as well as bolstering the efforts of those organizations, is an ensured investment in the establishment of regional and international stability. We must therefore guarantee adequate capacity-building for these various organizations, which would be a sound investment on the path to achieving regional and international stability.

In conclusion, Egypt continuously supports the efforts of the United Nations in the field of promoting comprehensive strategies to address conflicts by using different mechanisms and tools tailored to the specific nature of each conflict. We must be flexible in order to take into account changes on the ground and, in turn, to make optimal use of these tools, such as prevention and mediation. We must also bear in mind the pivotal role played by peacekeeping and peacebuilding operations in order to achieve the ultimate goal of establishing sustainable peace in conflict areas.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Colombia.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I thank you, Mr. President, and your delegation for convening this open debate on a very important issue for Colombia as a member of the Group of Friends of Mediation. I take this opportunity to thank the Ambassador of Turkey, who spoke on behalf of the Group.

The contributions of your country, Mr. President, and of the Security Council to the Final Agreement for Ending the Conflict and Building a Stable and Lasting Peace, which ended a five decade-long conflict in Colombia, as well as to its implementation through the United Nations Verification Mission in Colombia, is a clear demonstration of the value of multilateralism in conflict resolution. This is a topic of utmost importance this morning.

I thank the Archbishop of Canterbury for his comments, as well as Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for hers. The examples cited have been most valuable in taking us straight to the heart of the debate.

As several members of the Council and Member States alike have reiterated, over the past decade the notion of mediation has been strengthened as a indispensable mechanism in conflict resolution. That is certainly reflected in the leadership of the Secretary-General, which has overseen the implementation of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and the establishment of the High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation. It has been very important for us to witness the collective vision embraced by the integration of the Board on Mediation and the approval by the General Assembly and Member States of the reform of the Organization. All these efforts have made it possible to promote the prevention of conflict as part of diplomacy for peace.

In the concept note presented (S/2018/586, annex), the importance of improving mediation capacities is highlighted not only at the local and national levels, but of course at the regional level. Here, I would like to focus on how essential role of regional organizations, especially in the case of the Colombian conflict. As in the case of our own agreement, this critical connection to regional organizations allowed us to retain our national

ownership and inclusive approacht. We underscore the contributions of neighbouring States, observers and the Organization of American States, in highlighting the value of Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations to mediation efforts and to strengthening coordinated work between the United Nations and regional organizations. Such efforts certainly extended the possibilities for the success we have enjoyed to date and which will surely continue to be crucial in the long journey ahead towards the implementation of the peace agreement.

As many Council members have already highlighted, we reiterate that the participation of women must be central to and are key in the resolution of conflicts. It is not an option; it is a decision. As Ms. Qadeem mentioned, conflicts are hugely diverse, from Nepal to Colombia. Regardless of the type of conflict, women must be present prior to, during and — above all — after the negotiations in the implementation phase of an agreement.

No matter the type of conflict, be it in Africa or America, it has been proven that when women participate, the likelihood of peace being lasting, stable and sustainable automatically increases. We are on the right path, even if it is not an entirely satisfactory one, and the Council should apply the notion of mediation in the quest for more holistic approaches to conflict resolution.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Ms. Lodhi (Pakistan): My delegation would like to thank the United Kingdom presidency for holding this important debate and it is good to see Lord Ahmad presiding over this deba*e. I would also like to express my gratitude to the Archbishop of Canterbury and to Ms. Mossarat Qadeem, who is from my country, for their insightful briefings.

The notion and instrument of mediation are as old as humankind. Much as wars and conquests have filled the annals of human history, humankind has also sought to find ways to reconcile divergent interests and seek common ground to resolve disputes and conflicts. More recently, our collective faith in the power of dialogue has been reinforced by the successful mediation efforts in Colombia and between Greece and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia.

Yet large parts of the world, in desperate need of peace and conciliation, are denuded of this. We in fact live in times that are more uncertain than ever. Tensions and turbulence have re-emerged with greater intensity in various parts of the world. The world seems to be afflicted by greater turmoil and persisting conflicts, instead of living up to the principles of peace and justice of the Charter of the United Nations.

In the face of these challenges we need to evolve a comprehensive approach to addressing volatile situations before they erupt; preventing disputes from escalating into conflict and to containing and resolving conflicts when they occur, or indeed when they fester. The Secretary-General's call for a surge in diplomacy for peace is both urgent and important, for it costs far more to pick up the pieces after a conflict than it does to prevent one.

The Security Council, with its primary responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, has a critical role in that prevention-centric agenda. It must operationalize the full repository of measures set out in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations as the centrepiece of the global peace and security architecture. That is all the more relevant given that, in recent years, there has been growing criticism of the Council's tendency to resort to enforcement measures under Chapter VII. While Chapter VII is the ultimate instrument for the implementation of Security Council resolutions, its latent efficacy can be greatly enhanced through a timely and judicious application of Chapter VI. That complementarity between Chapters VI and VII must be clearly upheld.

The Security Council should authorize the Secretary-General to make more frequent use of his good offices and other possibilities for mediation and conciliation. We are happy to note that the Secretary-General is working to expand the pool of high-level envoys and senior mediators, with special emphasis on women. As much as the establishment of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Mediation is a welcome step in the right direction, so is gender parity in the composition of the Board.

While the Council could refer disputes to the International Court of Justice for an advisory opinion, if not a legal decision or adjudication, it should also utilize its mandatory enforcement authority under Chapter VII of the Charter to refer a dispute to the Court. The determination of the Court would thereafter

be binding on the parties, irrespective of whether or not they had accepted the jurisdiction of the Court.

While the United Nations has had some success in mediating political settlements, that record — as we all know — is checkered at best. The Jammu and Kashmir dispute remains among the oldest issues on the agenda of the Council. It was also the subject of one of the earliest applications of Chapter VI of the Charter. Through its various resolutions, the Security Council has provided that

"the final disposition of the State of Jammu and Kashmir will be made in accordance with the will of the people expressed through the democratic method of a free and impartial plebiscite conducted under the auspices of the United Nations" (*resolution 122 (1957), second preambular paragraph*).

The Security Council also instituted several mechanisms, including the United Nations Commission on India and Pakistan, the deployment of the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan and the appointment of representatives of the United Nations, who consulted the parties and submitted reports on how to resolve the dispute in accordance with provisions of relevant Security Council resolutions.

Sadly, those resolutions remain thus far unenforced and unimplemented. The international community cannot succeed in its efforts to strengthen conflict prevention and promote the peaceful settlement of disputes if the Security Council's own resolutions are held in abeyance by some. Both the Council's credibility as well as the objective of durable peace in my region are at stake. We must not fail those two important tests.

The United Nations, in the words of former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld, is a venture in progress towards an international community living in peace under the laws of justice. That is still a distant objective, but a worthy one. An essential prerequisite towards it is the growing currency of the pacific settlement of disputes. Few ideals are more worthy or important for our future.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Philippines.

Mr. Locsin (Philippines): The words "ultima ratio regis" were once inscribed in the bronze on Spanish royal cannon, meaning, "the sovereign's last argument". Kings in the past, republics in the present. War is the last argument of sovereignty — to fight for things essential to national honour and self-preservation, where surrender is never an option.

But mediation is a wise preliminary choice. Through mediation, States at odds might arrive at the settlement of disputes by the exchange of words, not bullets, and the deployment of arguments, not armour. Anyway, "ultima ratio regis" is always available — never peace at any price. There are situations where property is not worth saving and life not worth living, but speaking only from the mouths of the most number of cannons will not always decide the outcome in their favour.

What is still the longest war proves it: a lightly armed people defeated in no uncertain terms, accompanied by the most graphic photographic images. First the Europeans, then a super-Power that threw at a tiny nation of small people like my own every weapon of mass destruction short only of nuclear weapons. None are defeated until they say so; no one is victorious until the enemy leaves in disarray, as when the last chopper took off from the rooftop of the enemy's Embassy.

Discreet mediation followed the release of prisoners of war and remains of the slain for their memorials back home, but the costs of victory and defeat were staggering: 3 million killed on one side, 54,000 soldiers and scores of student protesters on the other. Billions of dollars in weapons were left rusting in rice fields — the last ones dumped in the sea — and a great nation came to doubt its indispensable mission to advance freedom in the world.

Mediation in Paris came too late, especially for those who, in good faith, made common cause with a foreigner and paid the price of abandonment. The minimum that mediation achieves is that, even when it fails, a lot is gained. For example, the realization of the real value in contention and the real price to be paid for it before the first shot is fired in an intractable conflict and before the last shot fired in vain. Sometimes the game is not worth the candle, nor is the price worth the cost of war.

That said, we take note of Russia's point: mediation can be misused to achieve domination on the cheap. It is much worse today: conflicts are longer and more intractable, with precision weaponry more indiscriminate and, from that height, impervious to compassion. All the more compelling is the case for mediation.

The Philippines highly appreciate the leadership of the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland in convening today's open debate on mediation and the settlement of disputes. We reaffirm the Philippines' commitment to mediation. The Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes is eponymous with the Philippines' desire for peace and its emphatic abhorrence of settlement by the use or threat of force.

When used in key phases of conflict, mediation is a game changer, especially in indecisive conflicts. The Philippine experience attests to this. After 18 years of sustained engagement in the peace process, the Philippine Government has enacted the Bangsamoro Organic Law, creating the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region. Signed by President Rodrigo Roa Duterte, it recognizes the aspirations of those living in Muslim Mindanao, including indigenous and Christian peoples, within the framework of one indivisible democratic republic and one bill of rights. Sovereignty cannot amputate itself; a republic cannot sponsor a non-republican solution, nor a democracy a dictatorship. A caliphate was never in the cards.

With regard to our peace negotiations with the Communist Party of the Philippines, the presidential adviser on the peace process announced that the doors for peace negotiations with the communist rebels are still open. We thank Norway for its hospitality and perseverance and, we hope, its continued engagement in that peace process.

The Philippines continues to co-sponsor the General Assembly resolution on promoting mediation and more funding for it. We have contributed mediation experts and constitution-writing, power-sharing and gender-inclusion issues to give prominence to women's organizations in recognition of the gender that binds the wounds of war and bears the heaviest burden of its excesses on their shoulders, as well as those of their loved ones. While we should put our trust in a common humanity, we must keep our powder dry.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Lithuania.

Ms. Plepytė (Lithuania): Allow me to start by commending the United Kingdom for convening this exceptionally important open debate. My delegation also thanks the Secretary-General and the briefers for their insightful presentations.

Lithuania aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union, as well as the statement delivered by the representative of Turkey behalf of the Group of Friends of Mediation.

Lithuania fully shares and acknowledges the importance of the conceptual shift from conflict management to conflict prevention, advocated so tirelessly by Secretary-General Guterres. We strongly welcome and support the focus of the Secretary-General on mediation. Alongside other efforts, mediation is an important tool for defusing conflicts or, better still, preventing them from happening. Every mediation success story means fewer conflicts, less human suffering and more possibilities for development. In that regard, we believe it is crucially important to ensure continued and stable funding for all mediation-related efforts.

Far too often, mediation and peace processes remain male-dominated. While women are disproportionately affected by conflict, their critical role in negotiating, peacekeeping and peacebuilding in their communities is often overlooked. Equal and effective participation and the full involvement of women at all levels, all stages and in all aspects of conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes needs to be ensured. Women should be part of the process as mediators and as peace negotiators.

We strongly support the Secretary-General in his efforts to enlarge the pool of high-level envoys and senior mediators with a focus on women mediators. In turn, countries should offer more women candidates for the United Nations mediation roster. We must also acknowledge that both mediation and dialogue facilitation need to be approached as a professional activity requiring specialized knowledge, expertise and operational guidance.

Faced with the emergence of new crises and the persistence of protracted conflicts, international and regional organizations must strengthen their capabilities for effective mediation and dialogue facilitation. The Security Council should play its role in providing political support to such efforts. Visits by the Council are critical in signalling political support for a mediation effort.

Regional organizations can be particularly helpful in the early identification of potential crises and mediation. The African Union, the European Union, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe

and the Council of Europe, inter alia, are offering their mediation and good offices to that effect. Regional organizations are well placed to develop preventive capacities. The efforts of subregional organizations in Africa and elsewhere aimed at conflict prevention offer a promising alternative for the future. We also encourage regional and subregional organizations to continue to appoint women as mediators and members of mediation teams.

Mediation could play a role in all stages of the conflict cycle, including conflict resolution. Where agreements need to be implemented, formal mediation efforts may need to continue to help resolve possible disputes that may arise from the implementation itself. That is critical so as to avoid a breakdown or relapse into violent conflict. Therefore, we should not forget to engage local communities in third party-supported dialogue processes in order to facilitate implementation processes and peacefully address any additional issues that may emerge.

Sustained political, financial and administrative support must be guaranteed for all mediation processes, and all States parties to a conflict must be engaged in order to reach a settlement. In the absence of such political will, the possibilities for meaningful mediation and dialogue facilitation are very limited.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Mr. Khoshroo (Islamic Republic of Iran): I thank the United Kingdom, as President of the Security Council, for organizing this open debate.

I align myself with the statement to be delivered by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the briefers for their valuable inputs.

Mediation, an essential tool in the settlement of disputes, should be seen in the larger context of promoting the rule of law at the international level. One of the pillars of the Organization is that international relations must be ruled by law instead of power. Accordingly, under the Charter of the United Nations, States have two complementary obligations: first, to refrain from the threat or use of force, and, secondly, to settle their international disputes by peaceful means. Despite acceptable progress in both directions, we have had failures that need to be rectified; There are instances of uneven implementation of laws that require adjustment, and there are opportunities that need to be explored.

For instance, on the eve of this century, a country was invaded by a permanent seatholder of the Security Council — occurring in total disregard of the Council and in blatant violation of the Charter of the United Nations. Not only is that same Power now pursuing a policy of withdrawal from international organizations and agreements — thereby jeopardizing the sanctity of international treaties — but it also openly invites all Member States to either disobey a specific resolution of the Council — I refer to resolution 2231 (2015) — or face punishment. If left unchecked, that alarming trend will further tarnish the credibility of the Organization and of the Council, thereby eroding the rule of law and leading to disorder.

Among the Charter provisions requiring proportionate, smart and astute application, one can refer to the application of Chapter VII on the functions of the Council. The Security Council has been increasingly, excessively and expeditiously resorting to the functions set out in Chapter VII, as if there were no other provisions in the Charter. As a result, in some cases, the sovereign rights of States as well as human rights have been seriously violated. Therefore, Chapter VII must be invoked as intended — as a measure of last resort — if necessary.

Mediation is one of the less-explored opportunities provided by the Charter. Therefore, awareness of its usefulness in the peaceful settlement of disputes should increase. In order to be effective, mediation should be conducted in an objective, transparent and neutral manner. As an essential element in enhancing trust among the parties concerned, that is largely dependent upon the independence, impartiality and integrity of the mediators. The exclusive purpose of the mediator should be to facilitate a process towards a just and comprehensive conclusion and help the parties to arrive at a solution themselves.

In conclusion, I pay tribute to the former Secretary-General, the late Kofi Annan, who held roles as mediator. He, as Foreign Minister Zarif of the Islamic Republic of Iran has said, was an unwavering champion for peace, justice and therule of law.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Sparber (Liechtenstein): We welcome this timely debate on mediation and the settlement of disputes. Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations defines mediation as a central function of the United Nations in the maintenance of peace and security.

In 2009, the Security Council recognized the importance of mediation, to be launched at the earliest possible phases of conflicts, reflecting a widespread understanding of the core functions of the United Nations. We are grateful that the Secretary-General has chosen to prioritize conflict prevention, including through his High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. We thank Archbishop Welby, one of its members, for joining us today. We also extend our support for the activities of the Mediation Support Unit of the Department for Political Affairs, as well as the Standby Team of Mediation Experts.

I wish to focus my comments today on the need to build sustainable peace through inclusion, preventing impunity for grave abuses of international law and addressing the proliferation of intra-State conflicts over issues of self-governance.

Successful mediation is not only about preventing or ending conflict, but about building the foundations for a sustainable and durable peace. Peace requires the inclusion of participants and perspectives beyond the parties to armed conflicts themselves. In particular, both participation and outcomes in mediation processes must be gender-sensitive. Women must have a meaningful role in negotiations, and there must be adequate gender expertise around the table. A 2015 study of 156 peace agreements showed that when women are included in peace processes there is a 20 per cent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least two years, and a 35 per cent increase in the probability of an agreement lasting at least 15 years. In addition, in ensuring the participation of often-marginalized groups such as youth, refugees and indigenous peoples, the designers and facilitators of mediation processes can give an agreement the best opportunity to build a broad constituency for peace and prevent a situation in which only the powerful are its beneficiaries.

Sustainable peace cannot allow for de facto or de jure impunity for the most serious crimes under international law. Making sure that those responsible for atrocity crimes face justice removes the most likely spoilers of a peace agreement from post-conflict society. The promise of justice will also deter them and others from committing similar crimes in the future. On the other hand, when mediation processes do not address serious crimes and ignore victims' calls for justice, they deny those victims the opportunity to heal and to collectively rebuild the fabric of society. When agreements do not seek out and remove the root causes of atrocities, there can be no deterrence for such crimes. Instead, they allow the seeds of conflict to grow again. Therefore, we support the position of the United Nations that the peace agreements it endorses can never promise amnesties for genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity or gross violations of human rights.Mediation efforts must give the necessary space to accountability work in situations where the most serious crimes under international law have been committed.

In order to continue to facilitate the mediation of sustainable peace settlements, we must examine the changing nature of conflict itself. We have witnessed a significant growth in intra-State conflicts, in particular the proliferation of those that originate in claims by communities within a State to a greater measure of governance over their own affairs. We believe that finding peaceful means to address such self-governance situations should be a focus area of the conflict prevention and resolution architecture of the Organization. United Nations field missions may be able to effectively support early local mediation in those situations by offering to facilitate a good-faith dialogue on self-governance between the State and affected communities where both parties have consented. Overall, we believe that sustainable peace is most achievable when all communities have a stake in how they are governed and can contribute to arrangements that consider different identities within the State. We will continue to work on this issue in partnership with the Liechtenstein Institute on Self-Determination in Princeton.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Canada.

Ms. Blais (Canada) (*spoke in French*): Allow me to start by thanking the United Kingdom for convening this important debate. Let me also thank the Secretary-General, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem from the PAIMAN Alumni Trust for their thought-provoking briefing today.

I also want to extend my heartfelt gratitude to civil society actors and human rights defenders around the

world for their courage in pursuing peaceful solutions to conflict. I am referring to people like Chantal Bilulu, a Congolese human rights defender who was recently in Ottawa to launch Women of Courage, a project to empower women peacebuilders at the grass-roots levels in Colombia, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, the Philippines, South Sudan and the West Bank.

The briefers today have spoken eloquently about the vital role that mediation processes play in conflict resolution and prevention. I would like to pick up on the issue of including women and youth, and express Canada's full agreement with the call by the United Kingdom and others for an increase in the number of women mediators. A growing body of research provides evidence that, when women's groups strongly influence peace negotiations, an agreement is much more likely to be reached, while when women's groups are not involved or have minimal influence, the chance of parties reaching a peace agreement diminishes considerably. The involvement of women's groups is also associated with much higher rates of implementation once an agreement is reached.

(*spoke in English*)

The United Nations, regional and subregional organizations and civil society are already doing excellent work to involve women in mediation at the local level. Canada is proud to be supporting three such initiatives

The first is in Burundi, where women have historically played an important role as agents of peace. Canada is a donor to the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund, which has done exemplary work in mediation and peaceful dispute settlement. In partnership with UN-Women, the Fund established a nationwide network of women mediators who organize local-level dialogues, work with provincial and local authorities and organize community dialogues. In only two years, the Fund has enabled hundreds of women mediators to mediate thousands of local conflicts, often preventing disputes from erupting into armed hostilities.

In the second initiative, Canada has been funding efforts to intense the engagement of women, youth and churches in support of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD)-led peace process in South Sudan. We are also sponsoring a gender advisor within IGAD whose task is to ensure that women's views are shared and incorporated in the peace talks. The constructive role of women, youth and churches has made an important contribution to the peace agreement that was signed in June. Incidentally, this was one of the topics discussed last month by young people from across Canada who gathered in Edmonton, Alberta, for the South Sudan Youth of Canada Conference.

In the third instance, the extraordinary work that Peace Ambassadors are doing in Mali is another example of youth- and women-led initiatives that are driving peaceful change in conflict-affected areas. Peace campaigns, such as those organized by the non-governmental organization Search for Common Ground, are using radio as a tool to ensure the transmission of accurate, constructive and conflict-sensitive information about women's needs and rights to the general public and local authorities.

Those initiatives illustrate what effective conflict mediation looks like on the ground, day to day. It takes the form of community peace dialogues, early-warning monitoring, information dissemination and dispelling false rumours, and active political engagement. From Colombia to Yemen, from Afghanistan to Guinea-Bissau, mediation and dialogue efforts that include women and youth have succeeded in reaching breakthroughs that would not have otherwise been possible.

The United Nations has made major strides in strengthening inclusive mediation, such as through the establishment of a gender-balanced High-level Advisory Board on Mediation, the work of Special Representative of the Secretary-General Ghassan Salamé to ensure greater participation by women in Libya's national dialogue process, and the efforts of Special Envoy for Syria, Staffan de Mistura, to ensure that the perspectives of women of all political stripes are incorporated into the Geneva process.

However, despite this wealth of examples, prejudice and intimidation too often deter women and youth from participating in peace processes. If we want to achieve meaningful and sustainable conflict resolution, we must continue to work together — with United Nations agencies, regional organizations and civil society partners — to systematically and meaningfully engage and empower women and youth so that they can be the architects of lasting peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Jordan.

Ms. Bahous (Jordan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like, at the outset, to welcome the Minister of State for the

Commonwealth and the United Nations, Lord Ahmed, as President at this meeting. I convey our gratitude and appreciation to your country, Sir, and for your able efforts during your presidency of the Security Council to underscore the purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, as well as for your positive role in maintaining international peace and security. You have been keen to revive the discussion within the Council on the role of mediation as a tool to settle conflicts in today's world. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General of the United Nations, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for their valuable briefings.

I would like to express my sincere condolences to the international community for the passing of the previous Secretary-General of the United Nations, Mr. Kofi Annan. His death is a great loss for peace and for humanity. He was a role model in the art of mediation, and his sincere efforts and commitment to the maintenance of international peace and security serve as an example of wise leadership. May his soul rest in peace.

Jordan believes that cooperation, tolerance and the rejection of hatred in our world are highly important. Differences among people are a reason for coexistence rather than divergence. Humankind finds its essence in the multiplicity of its colours, races, cultures, languages and religions. Unfortunately, we are witnessing at this time multiple complicated conflicts that focus on differences rather than points of commonality, rapprochement and coexistence. That is why we need an honest mediator who reconciles differences and builds trust, hope and a horizon, who focuses on common interests in order to resolve conflicts and achieve understanding and peace.

In that regard, I would like to commend the United Nations for playing a central role as an honest mediator in managing, resolving or preventing conflicts through different means, including the Mediation Support Unit and the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation, which was recently established by the Secretary-General, as well as the commitment of the United Nations to pursuing its endeavours through different means, including United Nations missions in conflict zones and the envoys of the Secretary-General.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan underscores its support for all means of strengthening United Nations mediation efforts in all conflict zones, based on our belief that the peaceful settlement of disputes is the only way to achieve lasting peace. We also commend the efforts of the Secretary-General to prevent and resolve conflicts and support diplomacy for peace. We stress the importance of implementing the agenda of the Secretary-General for building and sustaining peace, which places prevention at the heart of the United Nations activities to prevent conflicts. We emphasize the importance of his efforts to strengthen and support United Nations peace operations so that they are able to confront emerging challenges to international peace and security.

Mediation is an effective tool that can be used throughout the stages of conflicts, not only to settle them but also to prevent them or address their root causes and contain their effects. The longer the conflict goes on, the more the solutions become complicated and the more difficult the mediation becomes. The ones who suffer the most in such situations are innocent people, including women, children, the elderly and young people. That is clear in the current bloody conflicts in the Middle East, most important the Palestinian-Israeli conflict. Jordan has sought, through different means and with all parties, to reach a comprehensive, lasting and just solution to that crisis — a solution that meets the aspirations of the Palestinian people to freedom, dignity and their own State along the 4 June 1967 borders and with East Jerusalem as its capital.

From here within the Chamber, we call on the international community to step up its mediation efforts in the Middle East as a peaceful means of settling disputes, reconciling differences and stopping bloodshed, so as to ensure the stability of the region and the world. It is important to find individuals and parties that can build on sustainable solutions in that violence-affected region to achieve a more promising future that meets the aspirations of all the peoples in the region to security, peace and prosperity.

The Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, under the leadership of His Majesty King Abdullah II ibn Al Hussein, has adopted a moderate approach in its foreign policy. Jordan has always been the voice of wisdom and moderation and at the forefront of States calling for the primacy of reason and dialogue over violence and extremism. That is reflected in our position on a number of regional and international conflicts and crises and in our principled position on the Syrian crisis. We have always stated that there is no military solution to the crisis; the only solution is a political one that meets the

aspirations of the brotherly Syrian people and preserves the unity and territorial integrity of Syria with security and stability. Jordanian diplomacy has also played an important role in establishing a de-escalation zone in southern Syria by reconciling differences and building trust among the parties.

Jordan is a contributor to international peacekeeping operations. It contributes more than 100,000 troops, including Jordanian women. Jordan stresses the important role of those peacekeeping operations. We also underscore the special role that women play in peacekeeping operations and in building and sustaining peace. It is therefore important to increase the participation of women in all institutions and mechanisms that seek to prevent and resolve conflicts, as well as in mediation processes, especially in accordance with resolution 1325 (2000), which recognizes women's active role in establishing peace and security. I call for all obstacles that prevent women from playing their important and critical role to be eliminated.

Jordan has sought to link the women agenda with the youth agenda in its national plans to achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, in accordance with resolutions 1325 (2000) and 2250 (2015). In that connection, Jordan commends the efforts of the Secretary-General to strengthen gender equality within the United Nations.

In order for mediation to be successful it must address the root causes of problems before they escalate. Mediation must also take into consideration the suffering of people and the different dimensions of conflicts, including humanitarian, economic, social and geopolitical factors. It should also seek to promote tolerance, justice and coexistence as the ultimate goals for all humankind.

All forms of discrimination and injustice must be eliminated in order to sustain peace and combat exclusion and poverty. It is also necessary to implement the 2030 Agenda, as that would contribute to preventing conflicts, developing social peace and alleviating humanitarian suffering, which can lead, in many cases, to violence, extremism and conflict. I also note the important role that can be played by local institutions, civil society and regional organizations, and the need to increase their capacities and skills to that end.

In conclusion, unified support by the Security Council for all mediation efforts is essential to their success through providing political and moral support to mediators, who contribute to efforts aimed at preventing and resolving conflicts and reaching comprehensive and lasting solutions. We hope that this debate will be the beginning of a path on which we will walk together towards a future we want in a world that focuses on understanding rather than violence, on cooperation rather than repulsion and on dialogue to reach solutions rather than imposing them.

The President: I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously.

I now give the floor to the representative of Norway.

Mr. Hattrem (Norway): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the five Nordic countries — Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Sweden and my own country, Norway.

First, we wish to thank the United Kingdom for organizing this open debate. With an increase in the number of conflicts and their negative impact on international peace, security and development, it is more important than ever that we be successful in preventing and resolving conflicts through mediation.

Solving disputes by peaceful means remains the primary responsibility of Member States. At the same time, the Security Council has an important role. We welcome the fact that, last year, a united Security Council, working in concert with other stakeholders, contributed to the prevention of a potential outbreak of violence in The Gambia.

In line with the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council may call upon parties to disputes to settle them by peaceful means and may recommend appropriate procedures for such settlements. The Nordic countries encourage the Council to make full use of its mandate to engage in, support and promote mediation efforts, as it did by providing united and clear support for the Colombian peace process. In the Colombian case, we also see the crucial role that a United Nations mission, supported by a strong Security Council mandate, can play once a peace agreement has been signed and the parties embark on the difficult phase of implementing what was agreed.

The sustaining peace agenda highlights the importance of engagement throughout the conflict cycle. At the same time, the increasing complexity of today's conflicts poses challenges to United Nations peacemaking efforts. There is a complex relationship

between sanctions and peace processes. The involvement of the Security Council brings with it the responsibility to provide active support for peace efforts and to help to consolidate peace. We hope that the Council will pay closer attention to that dimension in situations where there have been positive developments, for example, in the relationships between Eritrea and Ethiopia and between Eritrea and Somalia.

The Nordic countries recognize that regional organizations are often best placed to take the lead in mediation efforts. We welcome and will support in every way possible the strengthened relationships between the African Union and the United Nations and between the African Union Peace and Security Council and the Security Council.

The Nordic countries are concerned about the low number of women participating in mediation processes. We support the Secretary-General in his efforts to rectify that, and we hope that the emerging cooperation between the regional networks of women mediators and the United Nations will lead to more inclusive peace processes, thereby increasing the likelihood of sustainable peace. The Nordic Women Mediators Network was established in 2015.

We fully support the Secretary-General's call for a surge in peace diplomacy. We welcome, and have contributed to, the increase in funding for mediation and early preventive efforts by the Department of Political Affairs in recent years. At the same time, sustained and predictable funding is required, not only on a voluntary basis.

As the report (S/2015/682) of the Secretary-General entitled "The future of United Nations peace operations: implementation of the recommendations of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations" underscores, the Council's efforts to manage conflicts should be tailored to support political solutions to conflicts. We support the United Nations reform agenda and look forward to seeing how the whole-of-pillar approach by the United Nations peace and security secretariat will lead to an enhanced role for mediation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

However, mediation is not a quick fix or a one-size-fits-all approach. Social and economic development remains crucial if we are to address the root causes. While supporting the United Nations mediation capabilities, the Nordic countries will remain major partners in long-term development.

The President: I now give the floor to thte representative of Guatemala.

Mr. Skinner-Kleé Arenales (Guatemala): My delegation thanks you wholeheartedly, Mr. President, for having convened this crucial debate on mediation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. This open debate is a distinct opportunity to exchange views on how Member States can best support mediation as a means for attaining the peaceful settlement of disputes. We also want to thank the United Kingdom delegation, of course, for the concept note prepared as a basis for our deliberations (S/2018/586, annex), as well as the briefers.

Guatemala recognizes the critical importance of Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations regarding the pacific settlement of disputes, along with the provisions set forth in Chapter VII to prevent conflict.

Although mediation is one of the most important tools, it is rarely implemented at an early stage in the development of any potential source of struggle. If violence is the dominant characteristic of a controversy, mediation ought to play a very important dissuading role at the onset in order to prevent the escalation of hostilities, and not, as is usually the case, when violence is already rampant. Indeed, when international law recognizes mediation as one of the most important means to prevent or to resolve disputes or conflicts, it does so on the basis that any effort predicated on mediation must take into account the root causes and the dynamics of the conflict, along with the interests, needs, traditions and sociopolitical idiosyncrasies of the population concerned. Effective mediation produces good results when the those circumstances are properly considered so that the efforts are not either misdirected or wasted, as improvisation is of course not advisable.

There is no silver bullet in mediation methods, and certainly there is no conventional practice that may be imposed from abroad unless there is a keen and conversant mediator with a deep knowledge and an awareness of the root causes and the nature of the conflict, as well as the composition and the expectations of the conflicting parties. However, ideally, a mediator must also possess an acumen of good practices and confidence-building measures. Notwithstanding what I have just said, we add that an able mediator must also have a sense of belonging and identify with the

population concerned and its plight. Indeed, this morning, the Secretary-General said:

> "Successful mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes requires a deep understanding of leaders and their constituencies and strong political will."

On the other hand, sustaining peace means the engagement of people of goodwill, including mediators, so that the social discontent of a population is not exacerbated into conflict. Furthermore, sustaining peace proposes a preventive scheme to ameliorate the conditions that beset the development and the welfare of the people — a state of affairs that, if it is not addressed, may be conducive to conflict. I again cite the Secretary-General this morning, saying that a call for diplomacy for peace is a call for sustaining peace.

(*spoke in Spanish*)

This Organization, the United Nations, continues to be the best reference for peace and represents the hope that the world has of achieving it. No other organization has that mandate or the moral or political authority to fulfil it. That is why we firmly believe that the concepts of sustainable peace and prevention pre-emptively resolve the unmet needs of the population, which, when not met, can degenerate into conflict, including the violation of human rights, the denial of opportunities, and social exclusion. Therefore, it is also crucial to provide sufficient resources to any peacekeeping operation agreed by the Security Council, which must be free of foreign interference not authorized by the Council. Likewise, peace missions must have a clear, viable and realistic mandate that includes mediation with a defined time frame among its objectives.

In conclusion, we can only highlight the importance of resolution 1325 (2000), which points out that women are essential actors in the resolution of any conflict. Women are agents of positive change and are efficient and knowledgeable administrators of the reality of their environment. As such, their participation in peace processes as mediators is essential. We are pleased to note that in recent years their contribution to peacekeeping operations has been highly valued.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Ukraine.

Mr. Vitrenko (Ukraine): Ukraine aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the observer of the European Union. I will also make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Allow me to begin by congratulating the delegation of the United Kingdom on fulfilling the duties of the presidency of the Security Council in a highly professional manner and efficient manner. I would also like to express our appreciation for your initiative, Mr. President, to convene today's discussion on mediation, which is a subject of particular importance for my delegation.

As a country countering military aggression from its eastern neighbour, Ukraine firmly believes in the need to strengthen United Nations capacities in the sphere of mediation, as well as to increase the efficiency of the Organization's respective efforts at all stages of the conflict cycle.

In the light of the Security Council's primary task to maintain international peace and security, we share the view that mediation activities can and should greatly contribute to reducing and to eliminating threats to global peace and security. They are an important tool in preventing conflicts, building up trust and confidence between the parties to a conflict, reaching peaceful solutions and consolidating peace agreements.

There is no doubt that, as a universal body enjoying a unique level of legitimacy, the United Nations must play as effective a role as possible in preventing potential conflicts and in addressing ongoing ones. Yet, as rightly observed by a number of speakers before me, the potential of the United Nations is not being used to its fullest in that regard. There are always justifications for why the United Nations does or does not do something. However, those reasons do not in any way absolve the United Nations from its responsibilities.

People all over the world, including in Ukraine, therefore continue to look up to the United Nations in the hope and expectation that it will step up its efforts to prevent armed conflicts between States and to ensure universal compliance with international law.

We note with regret the inability of the United Nations and the Council to take proper and robust action in response to the blatant violation of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity. As a result, the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine continues unabated for the fifth year. Exactly four years ago today, Russian armed forces launched a direct attack on Ukrainian military units near Ilovaisk, which is deep in Ukrainian sovereign territory. That act of aggression resulted in a treacherous massacre of 366 unarmed Ukrainian soldiers — I repeat 366 unarmed

Ukrainian soldiers — despite a safe passage agreement negotiated with the Russian Federation.

On the anniversary of that tragic occasion and with your indulgence, Mr. President, I would like to commemorate Ukrainians who sacrificed their lives in Ilovaisk and other battlefields in defence of their land and democratic values. As Ukraine mourns its heroes today, we would like the tragedy to serve as another reminder and warning to the Council and others that deals and compromises with Moscow are worthless.

Still, Ukraine remains committed to a peaceful resolution of the conflict. We proceed from the fact that Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations envisages an obligation to settle any international disputes peacefully and provides a toolkit to do so. In particular, we initiated proceedings at the International Court of Justice concerning the application of the International Convention for the Suppression of the Financing of Terrorism and of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. We lodged the declaration pursuant to article 12 (3) of the Rome Statute to enable the International Criminal Court to exercise its jurisdiction over war crimes committed since the beginning of the military aggression against Ukraine.

Earlier this year we filed a memorial in arbitration proceedings against the Russian Federation under the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, since Russia continues to violate Ukraine's sovereign rights in the Black Sea, the Sea of Azov and the Kerch Strait. Together with other members of the Joint Investigation Team, we continue working to ensure accountability for the downing of Malaysia Airlines Flight MH-17. All in all, we consider negotiations to be the go-to method of dispute settlement. Before lodging the cases mentioned at the various international judicial organs, we exhausted all avenues of negotiation at all levels.

In conclusion, my delegation strongly believes that empowering and strengthening existing international legal tools for the peaceful settlement of disputes between States should be one of the international community's priorities. In that context, a more proactive approach to mediation on the part of the United Nations is needed. By shying away from the issues considered to be too hot or sensitive, the United Nations is doing nothing less than undermining its own standing. As it pertains to our region, we are encouraged by the fact that the Secretary-General has identified the settlement of conflicts in Europe as one of his priorities for 2018. We now look forward to a concrete follow-through, with Article 99 of the Charter being used by the Secretary-General to the fullest, in particular in relation to the Russian-Ukrainian armed conflict.

Lastly, contributing to conflict resolution requires total commitment, combined with a conscious decision to uncompromisingly persevere in pursuit of a peaceful settlement, which will further strengthen the moral authority of the United Nations and make the Organization more resilient.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. García Moritán (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to congratulate the presidency of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland for convening today's debate and welcome this morning's participation by Lord Tariq Mahmood Ahmad, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for their briefings.

The Republic of Argentina is committed to the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. Our foreign policy is therefore guided by the conviction that multilateralism is essential for international peace and security. In that regard, we would like to reaffirm our commitment to the principle of the peaceful settlement of international disputes. We believe that every method of peaceful dispute settlement is equally valid for conflict resolution; only through such methods can just and lasting solutions be reached.

We underscore the obligation of all Member States to agree to peaceably settle their disputes, as stipulated by the Charter of the United Nations, as well as the particular role the Charter entrusts to the Secretary-General in the area of good offices and mediation. Mediation and mediation support are very important to the broader objectives of conflict prevention and resolution. That is why we support the Secretary-General's strategy to place preventive diplomacy at the centre of his management efforts. In that regard, I would like to underscore the support provided by the Secretariat both through advice on specific technical issues and in enhancing the capacities of regional partners and national and local actors.

The complexity of contemporary conflicts requires multidisciplinary approaches that allow for broad and inclusive agreements that can withstand the post-conflict test. Mediators should always take into account the unique features of each case without attempting to determine pre-established formulas or exploit possible positive synergies with other equally useful dispute-resolution mechanisms. We would like to highlight in particular the contribution of regional and subregional organizations to mediation processes and stress the importance of women's participation in all stages of the conflict resolution cycle, including in mediation processes.

The possibility that mediation, a mission of good offices or any other means of peaceful settlement could achieve its objective and purpose depends on the fulfilment in good faith of the obligations of the parties involved. When the organs of the United Nations call upon parties to a dispute to negotiate, they should do so in good faith and refrain from actions that could obstruct the obligation of both parties to resolve the dispute by peaceful means. States not party to a dispute must also contribute to its peaceful resolution and refrain from engaging in behaviour that could hamper the settlement of the dispute.

The use of the various dispute-resolution mechanisms is subject to the requisite consent of the parties to engage in a peaceful dispute-settlement process. Nonetheless, it is clear that the higher obligation of all Member States to settle disputes by peaceful means can never be subject only to the consent of the parties. Nor does it seem appropriate to make the validity of a mandate granted to the Secretary-General by the international community contingent upon the consent of the parties to a dispute.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Mexico.

Mr. Sandoval Mendiolea (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): We thank the presidency of the United Kingdom for convening today's very important debate. We also thank the Secretary-General and The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, as a member of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Mediation, for their briefings.

As the Security Council knows, in April 2009, under the presidency of Mexico, the Council considered today's subject and adopted a presidential statement (S/PRST/2009/8). Since then, considerable progress has been made in strengthening United Nations capabilities in mediation and peaceful dispute settlement. I would like to underscore in particular that one of the three pillars of the Secretary-General's action plan, borne out of the review of peace operations, is placing conflict prevention and mediation at the core of the work of the United Nations. We therefore commend the fact that the strengthening of mediation is part and parcel of the Secretary-General's reform proposal under the peace and security pillar.

The plethora of examples of successful mediation amid recent tensions demonstrates the invaluable contribution of that tool — the very essence of preventive diplomacy — to reducing the potential for the deterioration and resumption of conflict, alleviating human suffering and creating conditions for sustainable peace. The role of Member States and international organizations in mediation must respond to the new challenges posed by contemporary conflicts and crises. Beyond traditional patterns in the field of mediation, comprehensive, multidimensional, innovative and timely approaches are needed today to create conditions that are conducive to sustainable peace.

Mexico has historically spoken in favour of the prevention and peaceful settlement of disputes, and remains convinced that the genuine strengthening of the United Nations role depends, to a large extent, on the efficient use of the tools provided for in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations.

Mediation and other mechanisms for the peaceful settlement of disputes have been key to the prevention and resolution of political, ideological, natural, territorial and border disputes in Latin America. Mexico has played an important role in some of those efforts. For example, together with Colombia, Panama and Venezuela, we created a mediation mechanism called the Contadora Group to achieve the easing of tensions, political understanding and cooperation in Central American. The consensus achieved through the Group is a clear example that in a changing reality political dialogue must be an essential tool for understanding between States.

In the case of El Salvador, Mexico's participation with the so-called Group of Four — Colombia, Spain, Venezuela and Mexico — formed the so-called Group of Friends of the Secretary-General, which offered ongoing support to and facilitated the negotiation

efforts of the United Nations. There are many examples in our region, but I would especially like to mention that, within the Organization of American States, Mexico has contributed, together with other countries, to the regional mediation and cooperation efforts to resolve the current crises in Venezuela and Nicaragua.

The Security Council should continue to encourage and support the inclusion of mediation efforts in the maintenance of international peace and security. To that end, the Council may wish to consider the following measures.

First, the Council should adapt its approach to mediation in the light of the changing nature of conflicts and the increase in the number and diversity of actors in the field, including through a focus on the gender perspective.

Secondly, it should encourage the Secretary-General to proactively engage in the prevention of conflicts by providing his good offices to the parties and drawing the attention of the Council to situations that endanger international peace and security, in accordance with Articles 98 and 99 of the Charter.

Thirdly, it should build prevention and mediation capacities at local, national, subregional, regional and international levels. That is particularly important, considering that the peaceful settlement of disputes is a primary responsibility of Member States.

Fourthly, the Council should include in the mandates of peacekeeping operations and special political missions activities that contribute to local, national and regional mediation efforts to ensure conflict resolution, avoid polarization and underpin sustainable peace.

Fifthly, the number of women who participated as mediators in peace processes between 1990 and 2017 make up only two per cent of all mediators, which is why it is still necessary for the United Nations High-level Advisory Board on Mediation to address that under-representation and expand the list of potential high-level envoys and mediators. The Council should continue to promote the gender perspective and systematically integrate the Board's recommendations.

In conclusion, the international situation is beset by a series of crises and conflicts that are intertwined and converge with voices that incite the exacerbation of hostilities, hatred, racism and xenophobia. We must continue to value the role of mediation and preventive diplomacy, because it is up to us to make the principles of the Charter of the United Nations a reality.

Mexico considers it irresponsible and contrary to the principles that guide the Organization to call for the stigmatization of nationalities, religions or ethnicities. That should not have a place within the Member States of our Organization. It is not in line with the highest values of the United Nations, and constitutes acts that we all must condemn.

The President: I now give the floor to Her Excellency Ms. Joanne Adamson, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Ms. Adamson: We commend you, Mr. President, for convening this timely open debate.

The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova and Georgia align themselves with this statement.

Promoting international peace and security is part of the European Union's (EU) raison d'être, and is at the core of our international engagement. The Treaty of the EU guides the EU structures to "preserve peace, prevent conflicts and strengthen international security".

While the EU has a long history in promoting and exercising peace, the EU Global Strategy recently set conflict prevention as our top priority, thereby further enhancing our engagement for a more integrated approach to preventing and resolving conflicts. In the 2009 Concept on Strengthening EU Capacities, our member States have given a strong mandate to promote, leverage, support and fund mediation and dialogue efforts.

The EU is today engaged in some 40 mediation or dialogue processes worldwide. Sometimes, the EU is in a leading and visible role, such as facilitating the Belgrade and Pristina dialogue, and sometimes discretely, such as in reaching the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action with Iran. The EU is ready to do more. We are currently further strengthening our capacities and structures for mediation and dialogue support. We look forward to increasing joint initiatives with our partners, including enhancing dialogues with the United Nations and the African Union (AU).

In this Chamber, the Secretary-General stated that prevention is not a priority, but the priority. He also launched several initiatives and introduced innovations

in the field of mediation. We strongly agree with his vision and commend his commitment. The High-level Advisory Board on Mediation is, for example, an important addition to the United Nations toolbox.

Over the past years, there has been important progress in professionalizing mediation support. That is in part thanks to the Groups of Friends, led by Finland and Turkey. At their initiative, the Secretary-General issued his Guidance for Effective Mediation, which provides principles for managing peace processes. That is a concrete achievement that sets a standard for mediation engagements.

The United Nations has been at the forefront of those efforts. I would like to pay tribute to the United Nations Secretariat and the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit 10 years ago, providing discreet yet crucial policy and operational support. The EU is a proud supporter of the Mediation Support Unit. We command its work and we hope it will be further strengthened. Our Service for Foreign Policy Instruments has provided approximately €15 million for United Nations mediation projects worldwide over the past few years.

With the number of conflicts on the rise, their nature changing and tensions in our societies increasing, it is necessary to redouble our commitment to mediation and conflict prevention. As we look at the Council's agenda and beyond, we should collectively do more, better and earlier. The recent joint report between the United Nations and the World Bank, *Pathways for Peace*, made a convincing business case for conflict prevention. Scaling up preventive action could save up to $70 billion a year.

We need to take the next step in conflict prevention and mediation. Early warning needs to be matched with early action. The earlier we make use of mediation and mediation support, as the Secretary-General has encouraged in his report (A/72/115) to the General Assembly, the better. The Council can be a powerful force to resort to mediation early on, and should place preventive mediation at its heart.

From the highest levels to the local actors, peace processes are more than reaching an agreement with those who hold apparent power or guns. To sustain an agreement, we have to involve elites and local levels alike. Together with the United Nations, we have worked on insider mediators supporting local-level initiatives. Also, the inclusion of women and youth is not an option, but an imperative. We cannot reach sustainable agreements when only half the population is involved. The EU has worked to make a difference on the ground, such as in Syria, for example.

The inclusion of youth is another precondition for achieving sustainable results in peace processes. EU High Representative Mogherini has identified creating open spaces for young people and promoting funding for youth work at all levels as important steps in order to harness the positive potential of youth-led peace initiatives, while also reaching out to marginalized young people.

Together with the United Nations, EU will be soon organizing a retreat on mediation structures in regional and international organizations to further improve our engagement. Working together has practical benefits. In the Central African Republic, we supported a capacity-building and strategy retreat of the African Initiative Panel involving not only the Government of the Central African Republic, but also the AU, the United Nations, the Economic Community of Central African States, the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region and countries of the region, as well as non-governmental agencies, such as the Community of Sant'Egidio, the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue and the African Centre for the Constructive Resolution of Disputes. By bringing those actors together, we made progress towards achieving a common vision for the peace process. Such coordinated support is essential for bringing about peace in the Central African Republic, and we invite all actors to join those efforts.

Today, we have the technical means to better support mediation. The missing ingredient, which we now need, is political support. That is where the Council can play a crucial role. It is our collective responsibility. The EU is ready to play its part. When the EU engages in a peace process, it is a sustainable, long-term, and comprehensive commitment that stands together with and respects United Nations values. The EU can mobilize a number of tools, from peace operations to development assistance. Yet political purpose and the building of effective and lasting peace should always remain the main objective.

Lastly, it is also a way to respect the legacy of those who have dedicated their lives to defending peace and human rights. Among them, Kofi Annan was a prime figure, whose legacy should inspire us all. As he once stated, we have the means and the capacity to deal with

our problems, if only we can find the political will. The Council's mandate is to maintain peace and security. Enhancing our action in conflict prevention and mediation is not an option for peace, it is a necessity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Germany.

Mr. Schulz (Germany): I would like to thank the President of the Security Council for initiating today's open debate. I thank the briefers for their informative statements.

We align ourselves with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and the Chair of the Group of Friends of Mediation.

Germany very much welcomes the President's emphasis on the importance of mediation. Germany believes that mediation is a key instrument during all phases of conflict, from conflict prevention to stabilization and peacebuilding. It is an integral part of the Secretary-General's reform agenda, which focuses on prevention and sustaining peace, and enjoys our full support. As pressure on our global order intensifies, the need to resolve conflicts peacefully is becoming increasingly urgent. We need more dialogue instead of more confrontation, and more prevention instead of more intervention. Mediation is important to those ends, and the Security Council has a decisive role to play, not least in accordance with Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations. Germany therefore fully subscribes to presidential statement (S/PRST/2018/1) issued in January, and we encourage the Secretary-General to continue those efforts in that regard.

When the Council decides to entrust the Secretary-General, or another actor, with mediating a dispute, it is important that it provides political support, while providing the parties with adequate space to pursue conflict resolution. Adherence to certain standards and principles is critical when designing and conducting mediation processes. The Secretariat, the Mediation Support Unit and the Group of Friends have contributed greatly to the promotion of such standards and professional approaches in the area of mediation, which we fully support. For Germany, mediation also plays a key role in its national efforts to support peaceful crisis resolution. That is why we have expanded our engagement in mediation, for instance, by establishing a mediation unit in the Federal Foreign Office and increasing our mediation support significantly. We are keen to work with other Member States and regional organizations to promote mediation as a tool for the peaceful settlement of disputes — a task at the core of the United Nations mission. I will cite the following examples.

Today, in Yemen, we are facing the world's worst humanitarian crisis, and the situation on the ground is rapidly deteriorating. What is needed most is obviously a political solution. We therefore support the United Nations efforts towards a political process that involves all Yemeni groups. Germany continues to finance and facilitate track-two dialogues, local mediation and reconciliation, and, whenever possible, small-scale stabilization measures. As another example, in Darfur and the Sudan, we are also supporting the ongoing mediation efforts of the Joint Special Representative and Head of the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur to reach a lasting political agreement between the Sudanese Government and armed rebel groups, as set out in the Doha Document for Peace in Darfur. In our mediation efforts in Yemen, Darfur and elsewhere, we are focusing intensely on strengthening civil society and fostering inclusiveness by working on various tracks and ensuring that all views are heard.

Experience has shown that the most successful peace processes are supported by the population and benefit from the buy-in of all groups concerned. Crucially, that includes women as agents of change within mediation and reconciliation processes. Crisis prevention and stabilization can succeed only if women have an active role in peace processes and their views are respected. What makes a difference is not only increasing the number of women in mediation processes, but ensuring their influence on their structure and outcome. Germany is an active supporter of the women and peace and security agenda, and will continue to be as a non-permanent member on the Security Council.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Spain.

Mr. Moragas Sánchez (Spain) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to begin by thanking the United Kingdom for convening this open debate, which is especially important for Spain.

Over the past several years, we have devoted time, effort and resources to promoting preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes, including mediation. The Charter of the United Nations obligates States Members to settle their international

disputes by peaceful means so as to avoid jeopardizing international peace and security and justice. Among the various methods for the resolution of disputes, mediation is perhaps the oldest and undoubtedly one of the most effective with regard to resolving conflicts. The United Nations has carried out important work in that area, and it would be unfair to forget the many crises that it has successfully defused quietly through complex and often long-term efforts. Nevertheless, conflicts continue. Moreover, the situation today differs substantially from the one in 1945 when the San Francisco Charter was drafted.

We are faced with inter-State conflicts of a territorial nature and internal armed conflicts, as well as those concerning political transitions and ethnic-territorial and religious issues. There is also an increasing number of conflicts and risk factors, known as the new threats, which are regional in dimension, such as terrorism and organized crime, including the illicit trafficking in human beings, drugs and weapons, environmental crimes and breaches in cybersecurity. Lastly, we face conflicts resulting from the struggle for natural resources, in general involving water and fossil fuels. That reality reflects the need to adapt mediation and other dispute resolution mechanisms to the changing nature of conflicts and revise the guidelines developed by the United Nations for mediators, States and other actors that support mediation work in order for the process to be viable and its outcome lasting. The main prerequisite for mediation to be successful is the consent of all parties to a conflict, without which good-faith negotiations or commitment to the process is impossible. It is also essential that the process be inclusive, thereby lending heightened legitimacy to any agreement and decreasing the possibility of it being undermined by excluded parties.

For his or her part, the mediator must also meet a series of requirements. The work of the mediator must be agreed by the parties in conflict, impartial and carried out in respect of national sovereignty and with a comprehensive knowledge of the conflict, while enjoying the material and human resources allowing him or her to travel, meet with the parties in conflict, organize meetings, write reports and conduct other activities the process may require. At the same time, however, it is also essential that mediators know that mediation is not always necessarily the best response to a given conflict. They must be able to determine whether the time is right to mediate it, whether the type of conflict at hand actually requires mediation or whether the mechanism could ultimately cause more harm than good.

Practically since its founding, the United Nations has participated in mediation processes either through the direct involvement of the Secretary-General or through his Special Representatives, gradually establishing the structures needed to develop that function. However, considerable room for improvement remains in this area, which does not necessarily require developing new structures or adopting new resolutions, but rather involves certain aspects that can increase the effectiveness of mediation processes. It is also imperative that the United Nations provide a joint, rather than a fragmented, response and that all efforts be aligned to achieve a resolution to the conflict.

It is also important that the United Nations carry out joint mediation activities with other regional or subregional organizations. Another key element is the creation of national and local mechanisms to redress grievances and reduce tensions through mediation, facilitation and dialogue. That means devoting resources and efforts to the training of mediators at the regional and local levels, who can play an important role in preventing conflicts in their initial stages.

It is also essential to continue to encourage the participation of women in mediation processes, not because they have are more skilled at those tasks but because although conflicts affect the whole community, they are harder on women and girls, who have higher dropout rates and are victims of gender-based violence. For that reason, their contributions, needs and solutions are particularly important.

Religious leaders may also have a critical role to play in mediation for conflict prevention and resolution in contexts. Spain supports the creation of platforms of religious leaders for peace, especially in the most conflict areas where the need is most urgent, and the establishment of networks of local religious leaders, for which our country has already organized several meetings since 2015.

Spain places a particular emphasis on young people and on the need to train them in mediation, incorporate them into negotiation processes and empower them to act as agents to resolve disputes by peaceful and never violent means, thereby also preventing them from falling into radicalism.

The participation of Spain in the meetings on mediation held at the United Nations, the sponsorship of the various General Assembly resolutions, the significant contributions made to the Mediation Support Unit and the Department of Political Affairs in general, the contributions of Spain to the creation of the guidelines for effective mediation, its status as a founding partner and its participation in the activities of the Group of Friends of Mediation and, above all, the implementation of the Spanish-Moroccan Initiative on Mediation in the Mediterranean Region, which has enabled, among other things, the training of dozens of women mediators in the region, are tangible proof that mediation is one of our foreign policy priorities.

Finally, I thank the Secretary-General for his efforts to promote preventive diplomacy and mediation. We agree with him that prevention is not merely a priority but the priority, and that mediation is its preferred vehicle.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Kawamura (Japan): Japan supports the Secretary-General's mediation initiatives, which are deeply interlinked with conflict prevention, peacebuilding and the sustaining peace agenda. We welcomed the establishment of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Mediation last year, and we are encouraged by his field visits and continued work on mediation activities.

Japan has for many years played a positive role in aiding the peaceful settlement of disputes. Regarding our support for the resolution of the Mindanao conflict in the Philippines, for example, Japan contributed to a peace agreement between the Government and a former anti-Government armed group, the Moro Islamic Liberation Front, by hosting a meeting of the parties. We also deployed experts to the International Monitoring Team to monitor the ceasefire and the socioeconomic situation, and to provide community development and other support to help sustain peace in the conflict areas.

Today, as an active player of mediation, Japan wishes to highlight three points: inclusivity, capacity-building and partnerships.

First, to achieve sustaining peace, mediation should involve not only the combatants, but all the relevant actors, including women, young people, civil society, local communities and others as part of an inclusive process. In that regard, Japan welcomes greater gender balance among the members of the High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation, as well as the Secretary-General's commitment to increasing the number of women mediators. Japan also promotes women's participation in conflict resolution and prevention based on its National Action Plan on Women, Peace and Security. Japan contributed $1 million dollars to UN-Women to promote women's leadership so as to prevent emerging violent extremism in the Sahel region.

Secondly, sustaining peace will not be achieved without respecting national ownership. Here, capacity-building is crucial. One of Japan's main pillars of peacebuilding is an emphasis on people in the field. In Mindanao, after the ceasefire agreement, we supported capacity-building for students, teachers, local Government officers and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on peace education and conflict resolution to ensure lasting peace and prevent a relapse into conflict. Our support is provided under the banner of Japan Bangsamoro Initiatives for Reconstruction and Development, without excluding any religion. We will continue to make such efforts.

Thirdly, peace does not happen alone. Partnerships with relevant actors — including international, regional, subregional and local organizations — must be enhanced and continued. It is encouraging to see the efforts of African regional and subregional organizations, such as the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development and others that engage actively in negotiations or dialogue among all relevant actors in order to resolve conflicts regarding the continent. Strengthening the Organization's partnership with the AU Peace and Security Council, such as by convening joint annual meetings with the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission, is one way that Member States can further contribute.

The power of mediation is widely understood, yet challenges remain. It is essential to have proper conflict analysis and to share information with everyone. In that connection, the three points I highlighted earlier — inclusivity, capacity-building and partnerships — must be interlinked and enhanced. Mediation is by nature rarely a public affair, but this open debate reaffirms its importance and helps to continue discussions both inside and outside of the United Nations system on how it can best serve to advance the cause of sustaining peace.

The President: I particularly thank the representative of Japan for adhering to the four-minute time limit.

I now give the floor to the representative of Georgia.

Ms. Agladze (Georgia): Let me express my sincere gratitude to the United Kingdom presidency for convening today's important debate.

Georgia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union. I will now add a few remarks in my national capacity.

Since the last Security Council debate on this issue (see S/PV.6108), we have witnessed several major developments in support of the surge in diplomacy, such as the steadfast commitment of the Secretary-General to prioritizing prevention, the strengthening of the mediation capacity of the United Nations, and the commitment to creating the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. Despite all those efforts, there has been a ten-fold increase in the number of internationalized conflicts in recent decades.

At this juncture, it is critical that we take stock of ongoing mediation processes and reflect on our challenges and achievements. Let me share our national experience with regard to conflict settlement, where the United Nations, along with the European Union and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, has a special leadership role as one of the co-chairs of the Geneva international discussions, which is a unique and inclusive international mediation platform.

Ten years after the 2008 Russo-Georgian War, we still face a fully operational illegal Russian military presence in both occupied regions of Georgia. The continuous fortification of the occupation lines has had a heavy toll on the humanitarian and human rights situation on the ground. Against that backdrop, the peaceful dialogue formats — the Geneva international discussions and the incident prevention and response mechanisms under its umbrella — have a special role to play. While those formats have proved to be indispensable in preventing the wide-scale escalation of the conflict, we must also admit that they have failed to produce tangible, substantial results. Our main lessons from 44 rounds held thus far are the following.

First and foremost, neutral and good-faith mediation is key to a credible process. We now enjoy an impartial co-chairmanship within the Geneva international discussions. However, in the 1990s, for more than a decade conflict in Georgia was mediated by a party with vested interests in prolongating and escalating the conflict, which resulted in its full-scale military intervention and occupation. It is therefore critical that the Security Council give due attention to conflicts of interest in its deliberations on the conflict resolution process. In that context, the unilateral discontinuation of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia through the veto cast by the Russian Federation also comes to mind.

Secondly, we could not agree more with the Secretary-General in stating that getting the mediation process right can be as important as the substance of the talks. That becomes essential when we speak about issues such as the agenda and conduct during the talks. For almost a decade, we have witnessed permanent disregard of ground rules of the Geneva international discussions by Russia and other participants who use the tactics of so called walk-outs during the discussion on vital agenda items and blackmailing the peace formats with the threat of disrupting the negotiations if issues they dislike are raised. We therefore believe that the elaboration of concrete measures that prevent such procedural misuse of the mediation platforms should be a priority of the mediators.

At the same time, the mediation should not be confined solely to the facilitation of an environment suitable for negotiations. The mediators should further strive to take on the role of defenders of the basic principles of international law and create incentives for the parties to be constructive and fair players in the negotiation. Therefore, misconduct and the blackmailing of the process need to be dully assessed and discouraged.

Of course, even perfect mediators would not be able to achieve progress if the political will of the parties does not allow it. That has been the case on fundamental issues of the international discussions, such as the non-use of force, international security arrangements and the return of internally displaced persons and refugees. For instance, we have many times unilaterally reaffirmed the commitment to the non-use of force and firmly respected that principle. We are still awaiting reciprocity from the Russian side.

Finally let me join others in stressing the importance of engaging more women in conflict resolution. We warmly welcome the appointment of Ms. Cihan Sultanoğlu as the United Nations Representative to the

Geneva international discussions and express hope that, as the first woman co-Chair, she will bring positive impetus to the negotiations.

In conclusion, let me note that Georgia has intensified its efforts for reconciliation among the war-torn population so as to share the benefits of the country's development and European integration with the people residing in the occupied territories. A new peace initiative, entitled A Step to a Better Future, seeks to improve the humanitarian, social and economic conditions of the populations and to encourage contacts, movement and relations based on mutual interests along and across the dividing lines.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Portugal.

Mr. Duarte Lopes (Portugal): Portugal is fully aligned with the statement delivered by the European Union.

At the outset, I would like to congratulate the United Kingdom on having chosen this topic for an open debate at the Security Council. This reflection on how to better seek peaceful settlement of disputes is of paramount importance for international peace and security and for the success of the United Nations.

The duty of States to settle their differences by peaceful means is clearly set forth in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations and enshrined in countless international instruments, such as the Charter of the Organization of American States, the Constitutive Act of the African Union and the treaties establishing the European communities and the subsequent treaties and acts modifying and supplementing them to name just a few.

We commend the Secretary-General's efforts to strengthen the mediation capacity of the United Nations, calling for a surge in diplomacy for peace. The creation of the High-Level Advisory Board on Mediation is already a tangible result. The ongoing United Nations reform in the areas of management, peace and security, and development will certainly help to strengthen the holistic approach to conflict resolution. We reiterate the importance of strengthening conflict prevention through the development of early warning systems and the increase in capabilities for situations that require immediate action by the international community. Non-proliferation, the legal accountability of those responsible for mass atrocity crimes, and follow-up actions in transition processes during post-conflict periods are of significant relevance to the consolidation and support of peace.

To better implement mediation efforts, it is important to enhance national capabilities to better support special envoys. Also, greater international coordination and complementarity in mediation and conflict resolution actions are required in order to optimize resources and avoid overlapping. Partnerships, civil society at local and national levels, and the role of women and young people are key to successful mediation efforts.

Mediation has an interdisciplinary character. It involves a political and diplomatic approach; specialized expertise, for example, in conflicts over natural resources; and a legal dimension in support of transitional justice.

Finally, I would like to recall the interdependence between security and development, and reiterate that lasting peace will be achieved only if the causes of conflicts are tackled and addressed. Therefore, mediation and development must happen in parallel and in complementarity. Portugal is ready to continue to play an active role in those two parallel and complementary efforts.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sudan.

Mr. Elnour (Sudan) (*spoke in Arabic*): I wish to thank you, Mr. President, for having organized this important meeting. I thank the Secretary-General, The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem, Co-founder of PAIMAN Alumni Trust, for their valuable briefings. I also thank the delegation of the United Kingdom for its concept note (S/2018/586, annex).

I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to former Secretary-General Mr. Kofi Annan. He was a pillar of mediation efforts for the peaceful settlement of disputes.

My country's delegation hopes that today's deliberations will allow us to establish an objective and binding approach that places an absolute priority on the peaceful, mediation-based settlement of disputes and comprehensive political settlements that are strongly supported by the Security Council and the international community, in particular international and regional relevant partners. The Security Council should also

play its role in maintaining international peace and security, achieving sustainable stability and security in accordance with the Council's mandate and Article 2, paragraph 3, and Articles 33 and 36 of the Charter of the United Nations.

We underscore the importance of the Council's presence in promoting efforts to settle disputes peacefully, because even if mediators are objective and impartial, the support of stakeholders, in particular the Security Council and regional and subregional organizations, is needed. Needless to say, the objective and impartial positions of the Security Council towards the parties to a conflict remain the cornerstone of its role in settling conflicts. We also believe that the Security Council should remain united and condemn parties that prolong conflicts, in particular non-State actors.

The Sudan welcomes regional and international initiatives to settle disputes peacefully and, in particular, those of the African Union (AU), which continue to be developed. Those initiatives have achieved tangible results in finding African solutions to African problems within Africa. We must support such initiatives aimed at maintaining peace and security pursuant to Chapter VIII of the Charter, which attaches a central and key role to regional organizations in maintaining regional peace and security.

Furthermore, regional and subregional organizations, as well as neighbouring countries, are always the best placed and the most capable of acting as mediators. That is particularly true when internal conflicts become increasingly complex and when they spill over national borders and include other actors at the regional and international levels. The fact that regional and subregional organizations are also aware of the geopolitical, social, cultural and natural dimensions of such conflicts further highlights the importance of their role.

In that context, the Sudan welcomes the Joint United Nations-AU Framework for Enhanced Partnership in Peace and Security, established in April 2017. The Framework aims at developing the AU capacity and promoting mediation mechanisms and the peaceful settlement of disputes, while emphasizing the role of women and the 2030 Sustainable Agenda for Development, as well as the AU Agenda 2063.

The role of regional and subregional organizations is effective. I would highlight the role of the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) in the mediation for a peaceful resolution of the conflict in South Sudan. Recently, it led to an agreement between the parties to the conflict, in particular with regard to governance and security measures, following the agreement on a comprehensive ceasefire. There remain some outstanding details, and there are ongoing attempts to achieve an understanding on those issues. The initiative of President Al-Bashir of the Sudan, delegated by the leaders of IGAD countries, has played a decisive role in achieving that agreement, which was signed on 5 August in the presence of the Presidents of the States members of IGAD, as well as the representatives of the Secretary-General and of the African Union.

My country's delegation hopes that regional and international efforts to promote the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes and in the exchange of best practices to that end will be stepped up in the future. We need to build the capacity of developing countries for mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, as well as that of regional and subregional organizations. It is also necessary for the reform process within the United Nations today, which prioritizes prevention, to pave the way for increased international cooperation in that regard. I also wish to underline the complementarity of the efforts of regional organizations, on the one hand, and of the Security Council, on the other. All parties should work in the same direction so as to achieve the desired objective.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of India.

Mr. Akbaruddin (India): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this debate and for providing an opportunity to address mediation, which is an important tool of diplomacy. I also thank the briefers for their interesting perspectives.

The notion of mediation reflects a long-standing principle of international law. However, it was only in article 3 of the 1907 Hague Convention for the Pacific Settlement of International Disputes that such an approach was first formally affirmed. Following that initiative, both in the Covenant of the League of Nations and under the Charter of the United Nations, Members assumed a larger obligation than heretofore to settle disputes in a peaceful manner. Hence, opportunities for mediation were afforded greater scope.

Mediation, on the face of it, is based on the interest in and consent and commitment to a peaceful settlement

by all parties. In its very essence, mediation is premised on faith in the key principles of independence, sovereignty and freedom of choice, which all actors involved in disputes so zealously desire. The issue is therefore not whether mediation is a useful tool for peaceful settlement. Where acceptable to all parties, it is, in a manner of speaking, settled international law.

For us, as practitioners of multilateral diplomacy, the questions to be addressed are whether the apparatus of the United Nations, as currently constituted, can perform many of the basic functions required for effective mediation or, more acutely, is it more than a structural issue and one of functionality? Are there inherent characteristics that place limitations on the abilities of the United Nations? Are the mechanisms at the disposal of the United Nations sufficiently coherent and flexible to guide dynamic negotiations with an effective strategy? Can improving them help?

The United Nations does not come to mediation unencumbered. The problems of the United Nations apparatus as a mediator are ingrained in the nature of intergovernmental organizations. Add to that the specificities of the Charter of the United Nations, which is premised on cooperation among the permanent members. That cooperation is clearly not visibly evident these days. Where it is manifest, it invariably takes the form of the lowest common denominator. In the practice of day-to-day diplomacy, mediators need to be fully backed by Member States. However, States members of intergovernmental bodies inevitably tend to speak with different voices.

Policymaking within an international organization adds another layer of bargaining and trade-offs. That tortuous decision-making process, imbued with political trade-offs, saps the energy of the United Nations and its flexibility in pursuing mediation. Once the United Nations-authorized entities agree on a mediating proposal or framework, it cannot easily be modified in response to changing circumstances. Will pursuing Secretariat reforms change those inherent inadequacies? Limitations that are embedded in the very nature of intergovernmental organizations are not resolved by the revamping of the Secretariat. Since the problems are functional, it may be more realistic to look at functional solutions rather than structural ones. Rather than try and throw intractable issues into the lap of the United Nations, a more pragmatic approach is perhaps required.

As the Charter of the United Nations itself recognizes, disputes can be settled peacefully through a variety of mechanisms. Today, there are numerous actors and many forms of pacific settlement that may be better suited to addressing the different issues. Instead of putting the United Nations at the centre of mediation efforts and exhorting States to support them, the international community should perhaps give encouragement to those most motivated and having the capacity to do so to settle such issues, as appropriate.

Of course, there could be many forms of division of the tasks of pacific settlement of disputes between the United Nations and other concerned actors that can undoubtedly be devised. However, it is important not to charge the United Nations with responsibilities that it may be ill-suited to perform. Mediation, in every circumstance, is one such task that it is not geared to fulfil.

In line with that approach, allow me to take this opportunity to remind Pakistan — whose representative is the only speaker who has made unwarranted references to an integral part of India — that pacific settlement requires pacific intent in thinking and pacific content in action. Regurgitating a failed approach that has long been rejected by the international community is neither reflective of pacific intent nor a display of pacific content. We hope that, rather than indulge in polemics, the new Government of Pakistan will work constructively to build a safe, stable, secure and developed South Asian region free of terror and violence.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Romania.

Mr. Necula (Romania): I would like to commend the United Kingdom for convening this timely meeting on mediation and the settlement of disputes. Allow me also to express my deep appreciation for the informative briefing by Secretary-General António Guterres.

Romania aligns itself with the statements of the European Union and the Group of Friends of Mediation. I will now make a few remarks in my national capacity.

Since 2009, the year when this topic was last discussed in the Security Council (see S/PV.6108), the achievements made in promoting mediation have been remarkable. As a member of the Group of Friends of Mediation, Romania appreciates the successful work conducted by the Group at the United Nations, including through the promotion of resolutions in the General

Assembly on strengthening the role of mediation. We also commend the creation in the Secretariat of the Mediation Support Unit. We must keep that momentum, consolidate its normative and operational basis and reinforce support for mediation activities at the institutional level.

Mediation is an essential tool for conflict prevention. However, it should not be employed alone, but only as part of a greater and more structural approach together with other mechanisms, such as early warning, preventive diplomacy, preventive deployment and comprehensive analysis of the root causes of conflict, in order to ensure sustainable peace. In that regard, if mediation is to succeed it is essential to ensure cooperation and coherence of purpose among the actors involved. Success requires teamwork, and we know that much can still be achieved by using the unique capacities, knowledge and expertise that regional and subregional organizations such as the African Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the European Union (EU) and the Economic Community of West African States can offer.

We also believe that strengthening partnerships inside the United Nations is crucial, and we welcome the enhanced cooperation between United Nations bodies such as the Security Council and the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). Romania has outlined a set of priorities for its chairmanship of the PBC, including implementing peacebuilding and sustaining peace efforts, partnerships and synergy between the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund, all of which are directly connected to advancing mediation efforts. Preventive diplomacy also requires inclusiveness, and we cannot stress enough the importance of involving women and young people in mediation processes. There can be no progress without them.

A lot has been done but a great deal more can be achieved. Many international organizations are stepping up their mediation capabilities. As a member of the EU, Romania will support its strengthening of its peace mediation capacities. As a global actor in peace mediation, the EU has access to effective instruments of preventive action on the political, bilateral and multilateral diplomatic, and civilian fronts, as well as in the areas of trade and development.

Last but not least, we agree that mediation is not merely the automatic process of bringing parties together at the negotiation table. It must also be part of a broader culture of building mutual trust and understanding among the actors involved, and that is what we aim for.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Estonia.

Mr. Auväärt (Estonia): I would like to begin by thanking the presidency of the United Kingdom for convening this debate on mediation and the peaceful settlement of disputes.

Estonia aligns itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union.

Today's meeting is very timely. Not only are we witnessing an increase in conflicts, but a number of peace processes are experiencing setbacks, ceasefire agreements are not holding and an unprecedented number of people are being displaced from their homes. While we may start to doubt our capacity to settle conflicts in peaceful ways, we must remind ourselves that we cannot afford to do that. The peaceful resolution of conflicts is the very purpose of our Organization, and it is our collective responsibility under the Charter of the United Nations to do everything we can by peaceful means to avert the outbreak of crises.

The aspects of today's topic that I would like to focus on are mediation capacity, inclusivity and political will and leadership. Estonia supports the increasing focus of the United Nations on mediation as a crucial means of action in conflict resolution. We thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and welcome his initiatives to enhance mediation capacities in the United Nations itself as well as nationally and locally. Improving the ability to anticipate and react quickly to emerging and existing conflicts and enhancing the skills of cooperation and partnership-building and the virtues of care and trust are necessary investments in effective conflict prevention. The establishment of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation is also a step in the right direction. Besides that, Estonia greatly values the work of the Department of Political Affairs in the areas of prevention and mediation and we are proud to be among its supporters.

As many have already stressed today, we believe that inclusivity is key to successful conflict prevention. An awareness of the grievances and perspectives of various communities and groups — including the young and old, women, religious groups and minorities — is vital

to understanding the challenges around these issues and achieving lasting and sustainable solutions to them. We would like to emphasize that the specific inclusion of women is not only about ensuring their equal participation in negotiations but also helps to raise women-specific issues within conflicts. In that regard, it is important to ensure that women are included at decision-making levels and appointed as high-level mediators.

Lastly, let me emphasize how important political will and engagement are to successful mediation processes. We appeal to the Security Council to use the full potential of Chapter VI of the Charter in a united manner and in the spirit of cooperation. It is also just as much up to us, as the international community, to find ways to support and incentivize the political will for conflict resolution that we need to see from all individual Member States at all administrative levels.

Estonia has contributed to the peaceful settlement of disputes by taking part in several United Nations-led peacekeeping operations around the world, including the missions in Lebanon and Mali and in the United Nations Truce Supervision Organization. Peacekeeping, however, normally follows events that have already caused violence and suffering. In order to ensure that we do not simply react to conflicts as they occur, we must step up our efforts to use all available means to prevent conflicts in the first place. In that regard, I would like to emphasize the role of the Peacebuilding Commission as a central actor in conflict prevention and peacebuilding in the United Nations system. Estonia had the privilege of being a member of the Peacebuilding Commission last year, and we firmly support its broader focus. In addition, Estonia has supported the Peacebuilding Fund since 2013, as we believe that it is an effective peacebuilding instrument for providing catalytic, fast and flexible assistance. We will continue to promote those ideas throughout our first-ever bid for a non-permanent seat on the Security Council for the period from 2020 to 2021.

The President: I thank the representatives of Romania and Estonia for keeping to the time limits. I now give the floor to the representative of Ireland.

Mr. Flynn (Ireland): Thank you for convening today's important debate, Mr. President. At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretary-General, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Ms. Qadeem for their insightful briefings.

Ireland also aligns itself with the statements delivered earlier on behalf of the European Union and the Group of Friends of Mediation.

While we have collectively taken important steps to strengthen our capacity since the last debate on mediation in 2009 (see S/PV.6108), the changing global context in which we now operate makes mediation an ever more important tool. Ireland has been a consistent advocate for the role that mediation can play throughout the conflict cycle, from prevention to long-term reconciliation. We welcome the strong focus that the Secretary-General has placed on the importance of mediation, something that the Council has also acknowledged. With that in mind, today we will share some brief reflections and suggestions based on our own experiences in Ireland.

As others have said, inclusivity is a key element in successful mediation. However, despite clear evidence that involving women in negotiations can contribute to more inclusive and comprehensive peace agreements, women made up just 2 per cent of mediators in major peace processes between 1990 and 2017. If we are to be more effective in our use of mediation, that simply must change. In June Ireland hosted a Promoting Women in Peace mediation seminar, followed by a round-table discussion with international women mediators' networks. The key discussion points included the importance of gender mainstreaming and continued dialogue in peacebuilding, better recognition and resourcing of women mediators and meaningfully connecting grassroots-level mediation with national high-level processes, and the benefits of women mediators' networks as support systems that can help women find an entry point into negotiations.

We would also like to highlight the growing importance of the youth, peace and security agenda. Young people can play a positive role in mediation and their voices must be heard. Ireland provided financial support to the recently published progress study on youth and peace and security (see S/2018/86) and looks forward to the implementation of its recommendations.

If we want to improve our capacity in mediation, we must properly resource conflict-prevention and peacebuilding programmes. Ireland has invested $19.26 million in the Secretary-General's Peacebuilding Fund since 2006. We have also contributed €2.2 million in extrabudgetary support to the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs since its

inception in 2008. Meanwhile, as a founding member of the Women's Peace and Humanitarian Fund and one of its core donors, Ireland has seen the impact that mediation can make on the ground through empowering and resourcing women civil-society actors.

This year marks the twentieth anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, the result of a long process of negotiation, peacebuilding and — as Lord Ahmad said earlier — mediation in Northern Ireland. In that context, it is appropriate to recognize the critical work of the Northern Ireland Women's Coalition in those negotiations. The Coalition was particularly crucial in drafting language on reconciliation and integrated schooling. In April, addressing the General Assembly during the high-level meeting on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (see A/72/PV.83), President Michael D. Higgins of Ireland said that peace in Ireland could not have been achieved without the steady and courageous activism of civic organizations campaigning for a more just and peaceful society, many of which were led by the women of Ireland, north and south.

The Council has a particular responsibility to support the Secretary-General and the wider Organization, including the Peacebuilding Commission, in enhancing the use of effective mediation to prevent, manage and resolve conflicts. We strongly support the Secretary-General's call for a quantum leap in the financing of peacebuilding and conflict-prevention activities, and we urge the Council to support activities aimed at addressing the root causes of conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Libya.

Mr. Elmajerbi (Libya) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on your presidency of the Security Council this month and on organizing today's important meeting.

In centuries past, humankind has continued to suffer the scourge of wars and bloody conflicts that have wrought death, destruction, poverty and displacement, truly the cruellest experience that any human being can undergo. The survivors spend the rest of their lives recalling those unfading, tragic and vivid memories.

We are here in the Council today to discuss an extremely important issue, the settlement of conflicts, and how to use logic and common sense in order to silence the guns. There are essentially two types of conflicts. The first is conflict between States, the topic of our discussion today, and the second is the internal conflict that results from political differences and leads to fighting and destruction in the State concerned. That is the case in my country, Libya. In that regard, we have to acknowledge that disputes today are different. They are not simply international disputes; rather they are internal disputes with regional and international dimensions. Recent civil wars have been characterized by unjustified, inhumane violence perpetrated by militias and warlords to advance their personal interests. The bloody civil wars that have emerged in recent years are the result of the collapse of totalitarian regimes, leaving States facing numerous challenges and therefore incapable of maintaining control over their situation. In that regard, the Secretary-General's report of 27 June 2017 notes that

> "State fragility, the blurring of lines among political, criminal and ideological interests, as exemplified by the emergence of complex economies of conflict, and the unclear objectives of increasingly fragmented armed groups create multiple challenges for mediation engagement". (*A/72/115, para. 7*)

Internal conflicts today are highly complex, quite different from the conflicts of the past. Civil wars are affected by various factors both internal and external, which is why we need a comprehensive view and clear plan to address those conflicts that are considered the main obstacles to achieving security and sustainable and comprehensive development.

There are a number of challenges to mediation efforts aimed at resolving conflicts peacefully in line with the Charter of the United Nations. We acknowledge the noble objective of impartial mediation efforts that aim to stop bloodshed, whether in conflicts between countries or internally. We welcome all the mediation efforts employed by the United Nations, and would like to highlight the elements designed to enhance mediation efforts that are mentioned in the Secretary-General's report — that is, an enabling environment, practical mediation strategies, effective operations, implementation and capacity-building. In that regard, we believe that any successful mediation effort, especially where internal conflicts are concerned, must address the following factors.

The parties to a conflict must be aware of their humanitarian, historical and legal responsibility regarding the disputed issue, and mediation efforts

must focus on strengthening the political will of all the parties concerned. Mediation mechanisms must make it clear to the parties that interlocutors should separate themselves from the issue under dispute and keep the mediation process amicable, refraining from attacking one another. The importance of the notion of the nation State as a basis for cooperation should be underscored. Mediation should also be confined to a single initiative under the auspices of the United Nations and in cooperation with the relevant regional organizations. No mediation effort should rely on time factors as a way to achieve de-escalation. Mediators must resist the belief that parties to the conflict will become fatigued and make concessions as a result.

We believe that the Security Council can play a vital role in promoting mediation efforts that can achieve the peaceful settlement of disputes without interference or orders from outside. The Council must be united in promoting independent and impartial mediation efforts, with a view to sending a message to the parties to conflicts that the only way to settle disputes is by peaceful means.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that mediation is at the core of the Libyan crisis. The Security Council resolutions stressing that a political settlement in Libya must be Libyan-owned have not been reflected on the ground. Flagrant foreign interference in Libyan affairs continues to contribute to the deterioration of the situation, creating fertile ground for clashes and mistrust between the parties to the conflict. In that regard, we would like to note that the Head of the United Nations Support Mission in Libya addressed that issue in a television interview on 20 August, expressing his dissatisfaction with that interference and noting that it obstructs mediation between the parties to the conflict. With regard to the situation in Libya, we stress that mediation must bring together the parties to the conflict and all influential actors on the ground. Mediators should not have hidden agendas but should rather bring pressure to bear on the parties to the conflict and convince them that the aim is not only to achieve de-escalation but to reach a comprehensive and durable settlement.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Sri Lanka.

Mr. Perera (Sri Lanka): I would first like to congratulate the British presidency of the Security Council for convening this open debate on a vital subject related to the maintenance of international peace and security and a topic that has not been debated in the Security Council since 2009 (see S/PV.6108), despite its contemporary relevance and the growing complexity of conflicts around the world.

Sri Lanka welcomes the participation of His Excellency Lord Ahmad, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and United Nations of the United Kingdom, in today's debate. We also thank the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Secretary-General and the representative of civil society for their valuable briefings this morning.

We also join other delegations in saluting the memory of the late former Secretary-General Kofi Annan for his notable contribution to the cause of peace and development and the promotion of the humanitarian agenda, which will remain his true legacy to this Organization.

Mediation has been established over time as one of the more effective methods for preventing, managing and resolving conflicts. It is appropriate to recall here that Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations states that any dispute that is likely to endanger the maintenance of international peace and security should first be addressed through negotiation, mediation or other peaceful means, and also encourages the Council to call on the parties to use such means to settle disputes. However, the pacific settlement of disputes cannot be forced. The parties to a conflict must be persuaded by the merits of mediation and well-supported peace processes. Indeed, mediation, if it is to lead to lasting peace, must take place within normative and legal frameworks constituted by the rules of international law and humanitarian law and within the framework of the Charter and the relevant Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. The recurring General Assembly resolution entitled "Strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution" recognizes the increased use of mediation and reflects on the current challenges facing the international community in such mediation efforts, while calling on key actors to develop their mediation capacities. In that context, we particularly welcome the initiative taken by the Secretary-General to establish the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation.

When we focus on the resolution of disputes by peaceful means and in conformity with the principles

of international law and respect for human rights, it is important to reiterate that all United Nations bodies must uphold their commitment to the sovereign equality of States and respect their territorial integrity and political independence. It is the duty of all Member States to refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force in a manner inconsistent with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations. As a country that in the course of a 30-year conflict welcomed and engaged in reconciliation and mediation efforts between 2001 and 2006 by an external actor who was invited by both parties to the conflict, Sri Lanka is well aware of both the advantages and pitfalls of such efforts, however sincere, if not carefully calibrated, monitored and managed. In that regard, the coherence, coordination and complementarity of mediation efforts, backed by reconciliation and peacebuilding, are all essential and challenging, as a number of delegations have stressed today. Mediation actors at various levels — the international community, including the United Nations, regional and subregional organizations, international entities, civil society and national and local actors — must all be on board with regard to such efforts. Given civil society's immense importance in mediation efforts, Sri Lanka is pleased that a representative of civil society was included as a briefer in this debate.

The implementation of peace agreements may often depend at the beginning on a degree of substantial external support, including from donors. It can help to incentivize the people to support political efforts as they begin to enjoy the dividends of peace in terms of development and real economic benefits. While disputes and conflicts are unique and require specific approaches, good practices should inform all mediation efforts. We have to continue to adapt our approaches and capacities to meet the changing nature of conflict, particularly in the context of intra-State conflicts that threaten international and regional peace and security.

There are well-established best practices for mediation, the most important of which is the preparedness that is vital to responsible and credible mediation efforts, as are a cohesive team of specialists and the necessary political, financial and administrative support from the mediating entity. Perceptions are vital, and in that regard, impartiality becomes the bedrock of successful mediation. The process must never allow the possibility that it could perceived as biased towards one party. Nor can we forget that mediation is a voluntary process that requires the consent of the conflicting parties to be effective and lead to a lasting peace. Another important factor is a sense of inclusivity, so that the views and needs of the parties to a conflict and other stakeholders are not only represented, but also heard and integrated into the process and outcomes of a mediation effort. Above all, national ownership and leadership are needed if the parties to a conflict, and society as a whole, are to work towards sustaining peace, since the responsibility must be broadly shared by the Government and national stakeholders. There is undoubtedly an inextricable link between gender inequality and international peace and security, as expressed in resolution 1325 (2000). The active participation of women at all levels is necessary, if national ownership is to be meaningful, as has been stressed throughout today's debate. Effective mediation will therefore require gender equality and women's empowerment, human security, human rights and development to mesh together.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Cuba.

Mrs. Rodríguez Camejo (Cuba) (*spoke in Spanish*): We endorse the statement delivered by the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Cuba is firmly committed to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes and their prevention through mediation. The most effective way in which the Security Council can support mediation as a means for the pacific settlement of disputes is to ensure that it is carried out in full respect for international law, the Charter of the United Nations and the principles of sovereignty, refraining from the use or threat of the use of force, territorial integrity, political independence and non-interference in the internal affairs of States. My country has noted with concern the increasing tendency of the Security Council to invoke Chapter VII of the Charter excessively and hastily, since war, confrontation, hostilities and sanctions have never helped to maintain peace and international security and never will. It is regrettable that the Security Council is too quick to seek recourse in the provisions of Articles 41 and 42 of the Charter without having fully exhausted all other options, including those provided for in Chapter VI, and without considering their consequences, including the short- and long-term effects of imposing sanctions, particularly for political processes aimed at achieving the peaceful settlement of conflicts.

The recent events and precedents where we have seen manipulation of the Charter, double standards and flagrant violations of international law have shown that when there is no good faith, impartiality or respect for a country's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity, objective mediation is impossible. Neither can any mechanism for the peaceful settlement of disputes, including mediation, be effective as long as certain States continue to use or threaten to use force against the territorial integrity or political independence of others, or to impose preconceived, uniform doctrines. Every situation must be managed according to its specific characteristics. Mediation should not be automatically considered the most appropriate method in every case.

Cuba believes that for mediation to be credible and effective, it must also enjoy the will and consent of the parties to a particular dispute or conflict, the impartiality of mediators, their fulfilment of the mandates agreed upon, respect for national sovereignty, compliance with State laws and operational preparedness, including mediators' substantive and procedural expertise. In that regard, we stress the particular role that the Charter confers on the Secretary-General in the use of his good offices and mediation, while at the same time acknowledging that the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution, particularly through mediation, under the Charter and international law, continue to be a fundamental responsibility of Member States. We appreciate the efforts of the Secretary-General to continue strengthening United Nations mediation support capacities, in accordance with the relevant adopted mandates. However, the role assigned to non-governmental organizations, civil society and other entities as mediation support actors with regard to conflict prevention must be evaluated carefully on a case-by-case basis, given that, as we have seen in various conflicts, they have pursued foreign agendas and lacked impartiality and good faith.

In conclusion, as one of the methods for the pacific settlement of disputes provided for in Chapter VI of the Charter, mediation can and has been proven to be effective in certain situations. The peace agreements reached by the Government of Colombia and the Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia-Ejército del Pueblo in Havana in 2016, which ended more than five decades of armed conflict, are one such concrete example. Maintaining and implementing those peace agreements currently is the responsibility not only of the parties, but also of the international community and the Security Council. To the extent possible, Cuba will continue to contribute with humility, discretion and profound respect for the parties' positions at their request in providing the means to achieve stable and lasting peace in Colombia.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Djibouti.

Mr. Doualeh (Djibouti): Djibouti is very grateful for the opportunity to address the Security Council on how it can more effectively support mediation as a means for the pacific settlement of disputes. My Government would like to thank Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon and the United Kingdom delegation for bringing this important subject before the Council. Coincidentally, this open debate on mediation and the settlement of disputes is taking place as we continue to mourn the loss of a truly inspirational leader, Mr. Kofi Annan, who not only made an immense contribution to peace in the world as Secretary-General but also devoted the remaining years of his life to mediation and resolving crises in many parts of the world. We in Djibouti will be forever grateful to him for the support he gave in 2000 to the Djibouti-led Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) peace process, the so-called Arta peace process, named for the city of Arta, 30 kilometres from Djibouti city. His support and that of the Security Council were crucial to the success of the largest Somali-owned peace process, which culminated in the formation of the Transitional National Government and offered a basis for peace and national reconciliation in Somalia.

Djibouti's views on mediation are informed by its long and continuing involvement in peace and conflict-resolution processes in the region, and by its recent experience of participation in the six-year mediation effort conducted by Qatar to resolve a territorial dispute and related issues between Djibouti and Eritrea. The mediation did not succeed, but there are important lessons to be learned from it.

First, mediation is not for amateurs. It requires special skills honed by experience, and cannot be performed successfully by just anyone, no matter how well intentioned. That is why Djibouti welcomed the creation of a platform for sharing experience and learning between the members of the IGAD roster of mediators, the African Union members of the Panel of the Wise and members of the Pan-African Network of the Wise from regional economic communities and

regional mechanisms. We want to take this opportunity to commend those involved in developing the Strategic Guidelines on Mediation document, which, to borrow the words of Dr. Aleu Garang, Coordinator of the IGAD Mediation Support Unit, will serve the crucial purpose of informing mediators about the steps that must be followed in order to achieve professionally oriented, impartial and efficient intervention in conflict-prevention and mediation processes. Most importantly, Djibouti applauds the Secretary-General's establishment of a High-level Advisory Board on Mediation, and urges the Council to lend it the maximum support. States and international organizations called on to mediate international disputes should be encouraged to seek the active involvement and assistance of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Board.

Secondly, there must be genuine commitment to the process by the disputing States. Paying lip service is not enough. Mediators cannot succeed if one of the parties refuses to appoint representatives, appear at meetings or cooperate with the mediator's fact-finding efforts.

Thirdly, there must be accountability and consequences. Participating States must be made aware that they will be held accountable for non-participation in the process, and that there will be meaningful consequences if they fail to act in good faith.

Fourthly, there must be a time limit. If not, mediation can be dragged out for years — six, in our case — without meaningful progress. Mediators do not easily admit failure. A cynical party may exploit the cover that mediation provides to extend the settlement process rather than expedite it, and to avoid an amicable resolution rather than contribute to it. Time limits, in our view, address both of those problems.

Fifthly, it should be understood from the outset that recourse will be made to another of the settlement procedures listed in Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nation in the event that mediation fails. Mediation will have a better chance of success if the parties understand that one of the consequences of failure will be arbitration or litigation, not a continued stalemate. The fundamental objective is not mediation for mediation's sake, but settlement of the dispute. If mediation fails, settlement must be pursued by other peaceful means. In that regard, we want to call attention to the decision that the Secretary-General made in January following the failure of the good-offices process — a form of mediation — to resolve a controversy between Guyana and Venezuela, ruling that it would have to be resolved by judicial settlement in the International Court of Justice. That will ensure a final, binding and peaceful settlement of the dispute.

Another noteworthy precedent is the mediation between Guatemala and Belize conducted by the Secretary General of the Organization of American States. This process produced an agreement providing that if the parties were not able to settle their long-standing territorial dispute, they would submit it for resolution by the International Court of Justice. Djibouti understands that both States are now in the process of fulfilling their respective constitutional requirements so that the matter can be resolved by the Court. To the same end, Djibouti has proposed that the Secretary-General, with the support of the Security Council, and potentially the Advisory Board, undertake a new, time-limited mediation effort to achieve a final settlement between Djibouti and Eritrea, with the proviso that if it proves impossible to reach an agreement, the dispute will be submitted to binding arbitration or the International Court of Justice.

Djibouti joins you, Sir, and all the members of the Council, in supporting the peaceful settlement of disputes in accordance with international law via the means set out in Article 33. Mediation is one of them and therefore merits our encouragement, as do arbitration and judicial settlement, when mediation is unavailable or unavailing.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Morocco.

Mr. Kadiri (Morocco): At the outset, I would like to congratulate the United Kingdom on its successful presidency of the Security Council and for convening this very welcome and long-overdue debate on mediation and the settlement of disputes. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and the other distinguished speakers for their statements. We reiterate our heartfelt condolences and deepest sympathy at the passing of former Secretary-General Kofi Annan.

Our discussion today is indeed timely and necessary in several senses. First, the last dedicated debate on mediation and the settlement of disputes was held almost a decade ago, in 2009 (see S/PV.6108). Secondly, this is a time when new, more complex and global challenges are posing considerable threats to the safety and security of our States. Thirdly, the scourges and challenges we face today mean that only united

and concerted efforts can restore our ability as an international community to find cost-effective ways to prevent new conflicts and crises that could undermine all the peacebuilding, development and sustainable peace efforts made so far.

From our perspective, for mediation efforts to be successful, the mediators should first operate in full respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and national ownership of the States Members of the United Nations. Secondly, they should ensure consent with regard to the process as well as a mutually acceptable political agreement, as rightly stated in the definition of mediation included in the concept note (S/2018/586, annex). Thirdly, they should ensure that the main, essential stakeholders in a dispute fully participate in and contribute to any mediation process. Fourthly, they should underline the importance of national capacity in conflict prevention and resolution, with the aim of encouraging greater involvement nationally, including that of women and young people. Fifthly, they should draw strategic conclusions from past experiences of good offices, best practices and lessons learned, and sixthly, they should help focus the international community's attention on the root causes of conflicts by acting before they occur.

Morocco is firmly committed to the principle of the peaceful settlement of disputes, as enshrined in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. Since our independence, we have played a key mediating role within the framework of the United Nations and at the bilateral, regional and subregional levels, particularly in Africa and the Middle East, a role based on our firm belief in the principle of collective security and in the centrality of the United Nations in promoting the peaceful settlement of disputes. In addition, following the General Assembly's adoption of resolution 65/283 encouraging Member States to promote regional mediation initiatives, in 2012 Morocco and Spain launched the Med-Med Initiative, promoting mediation in the Mediterranean region. This unique experience has enabled participants in the Initiative to achieve concrete results, such as mapping all mediation actors, as well as organizing several workshops, including one dedicated to the work of women in mediation. Morocco has also been part of the Mediterranean Women Mediators' Network, launched by Italy in 2017, and has actively participated in building valuable contacts and enlarging the scope of experiences and best practices for strengthening the role of women as drivers of peace across the Mediterranean.

Morocco remains more committed than ever to contributing to resolving conflicts at every stage by fostering preventive diplomacy, peacekeeping operations, mediation, disarmament and peacebuilding efforts, and through dedicated collaborative partnerships and South-South cooperation, aimed at ensuring the benefits of economic development at the regional level.

Before concluding, I would like to share a few thoughts on how we as Member States, together with the United Nations, can further promote mediation for conflict resolution and the settlement of disputes. First, we should focus on the key role that the Security Council can play by promoting mediation as a key aspect of the maintenance of international peace and security. Secondly, a better knowledge and understanding of disputes and their intricate dynamics is key to preparing for any mediation effort. Thirdly, to be successful, those efforts must be guided by clear parameters and priorities while preventing any proliferation of stakeholders. And fourthly, it is crucial that the United Nations and the Security Council take back the lead on any mediation process that does not meet the prerequisites for successful mediation.

In conclusion, I would like to congratulate the Secretary-General on his new strategy of putting conflict prevention, mediation and the primacy of political solutions at the centre of the work and priorities of the United Nations. I would also like to thank the Department of Political Affairs for supporting our efforts to promote mediation and the Med-Med Initiative.Morocco will continue its strong support for the Department of Political Affairs, as it has for many years. It is our conviction that, if the international community manages to unlock the full potential of mediation and conflict prevention, then the United Nations will be able to act in advance of any crisis and to invest considerable human and financial resources to benefit development.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Belgium.

Mr. Pecsteen de Buytswerve (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium associates itself with the statements made by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of the Group of Friends of Mediation.

I would also like to make some observations in my national capacity.

Belgium has made conflict prevention one of its priorities, for which mediation is an essential tool. Belgium supports and encourages mediation initiatives. That is why we have organized various conferences on the topic that contribute to sharing experiences, the making of contacts and the development of cooperation between mediation participants. Last February, we organized, in collaboration with the International Committee of the Red Cross, a seminar in New York on bridges between humanitarian negotiation and political mediation. It was noted that there was sometimes a difficulty in merging the objectives of political mediation and those of humanitarian negotiation. Too often, the actors involved in each of those processes operate in isolation. Strategic reflection is therefore necessary in order to make the best choices, while information must also be shared freely, including within the Security Council.

The need to promote the active participation of women in mediation processes is another key theme. Together with the African Union and the International Peace Institute, we organized another seminar on that topic with African women mediators. That led us to a clear observation, namely, substantial participation by women will never be the result of wishful thinking, but rather the fruit of a decisive strategy. Without it, negotiating teams and groups consulted in conflict resolution will reflect our societies, which still too often do not sufficiently include women. That has also had an impact on the outcome of the mediation process. The same is true for young adults, another group to which the Council has devoted a resolution — resolution 2250 (2015). It is important to encourage local and regional initiatives, such as the African Union FemWise-Africa initiative.

I would also like to stress the importance of coordination between mediation and peacekeeping operations. Belgium supports the Secretary-General in his determination to increase mediation expertise within missions and to strengthen partnerships with local and national mediation actors. The use of mixed teams is a key tool in that connection, as it allows increased contact with local authorities, traditional and religious leaders and other relevant actors on the ground in order to prevent local tensions from fuelling conflict. Efforts made in that regard within the United Nations Organization Stabilization Mission in the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic should be commended. Special envoys and regional offices can also play a critical role in conflict prevention.

The Security Council does indeed have a role to play in this area. The complexity of the contexts in which mediation processes take place requires an integrated approach. Through its political messages, the Council can contribute to the effective coordination of these various initiatives and promote common goals. The Council must support the Secretary-General's efforts in that regard.

Furthermore, it is important to pay particular attention to the root causes that have given rise to conflict. There must be total cooperation between peacekeeping operations and country teams. Work on fundamental issues such as governance, the criminal justice system, elections and transitional justice is essential to sustaining peace and supplements the efforts of peacekeeping operations.

Finally, in addition to its support of the Department of Political Affairs, Belgium also finances various projects initiated by non-governmental organizations specializing in mediation and conflict prevention, as well as multiple mediation organizations based in Brussels, each with a different conflict-related specialty. With that institutional body and the availability of many specialists, Brussels has broad expertise that will increase the chances of success of a multifaceted conflict mediation. Those assets are now at the service of peace.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Ms. Zappia (Italy): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this debate. I also wish to thank the Secretary-General and all the briefers for their valuable contributions.

Italy aligns itself with the statements delivered by the observer of the European Union and by the representative of the Group of Friends of Mediation.

Experience has proven that the recourse to peaceful means for the prevention and settlement of disputes and crises is the best and most cost-effective solution. Among the peaceful tools at our disposal, mediation is key. It is a vital instrument to give substance to the sustaining peace agenda. It is not just a way to overcome

crises, it is also an occasion to reinvigorate the positive forces of a country, promote dialogue and inclusiveness and, ultimately, eliminate the root causes of conflicts.

The United Nations plays an essential role in promoting mediation, most notably through the Department of Political Affairs (DPA) and its Mediation Support Unit. Strengthening the mediation capabilities embedded in United Nations missions in the field is also crucial. The creation and deployment of Peace and Development Advisers is an important step in that direction.

The Secretary General has injected new energy into this dynamic by promoting a surge in diplomacy and establishing the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. The dialogue the United Nations is fostering in different parts of the world, such as Libya, the Horn of Africa and Colombia, is a tangible example of this.

As a proud partner of DPA, Italy has consistently scaled up its contribution to the Department in support of its mediation activities, and will provide additional funding soon. Italy is also partnering with UN-Women and the United Nations Development Programme to promote the inclusion of women and a gender perspective into peace, national dialogue and reconciliation processes, and to develop the necessary capabilities.

We encourage the Secretary-General to fully exert his powers under Article 99 of the Charter of the United Nations.

The Security Council should more frequently adopt the informal-meeting format to discuss issues that, while not being formally on the agenda, still deserve its attention, and it should be briefed more frequently by the relevant civil society actors. As a member of the Peacebuilding Commission, Italy believes that inviting the Chairs of the country-specific configurations to brief the Council is a practice that should be regularly pursued.

The United Nations should also strengthen partnerships with regional and subregional organizations in the area of mediation. Civil society actors are also important partners. I take the example of the support that the Comunità di Sant'Egidio provided to the Central African Republic peace process.

Mediation can produce sustainable and lasting solutions only if it is inclusive. Women in particular play an essential role in reconciliation processes and in building inclusive societies, and therefore lasting peace. Today, however, too few women are involved in mediation. Italy attaches great importance to ensuring the full and active participation of women in conflict prevention, management and resolution and in post-conflict efforts. That has been a priority of our term in the Security Council and is a key issue we are promoting through our candidature to the Human Rights Council for the 2019-2021 term. Italy has launched the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network in order to promote the meaningful participation of women in peace processes in the Mediterranean region.

In conclusion, Italy reaffirms its strong commitment to mediation as a tool to overcome the most complex challenges. In that spirit, we will continue to work relentlessly to create opportunities and platforms for dialogue. In October, Italy will host the Italy-Africa Ministerial Conference, and in November, the fourth iteration of the Mediterranean Dialogues. Finally, as announced by Prime Minister Giuseppe Conte, Italy will also host an international conference on Libya.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Bangladesh.

Mr. Bin Momen (Bangladesh): We thank the United Kingdom presidency for organizing this open debate. The focus on mediation and the settlement of disputes is significant, since the last time the Council deliberated on the subject was in April 2009 (see S/PV.6108). The presidential statement adopted in the aftermath of that debate remains (S/PRST/2009/8) pertinent to our present day context. We thank the Secretary-General for sharing his thoughts about the use of mediation as a tool for his desired surge in peace diplomacy. We appreciate the valuable insights shared by other briefers this morning.

Our delegation aligns itself with the statements delivered on behalf of the Group of Friends of Mediation and to be delivered on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Mediation has traditionally proven to be a useful instrument for preventing and resolving both inter-State and intra-State conflicts. There have been a number of constructive initiatives in recent years with a view to enhancing the capacity and expertise of the United Nations on mediation. It is critical that the momentum be sustained towards further integrating mediation in the comprehensive approach to sustaining peace. In that context, Bangladesh welcomes the Secretary-General's decision to establish the High-level Advisory

Board on Mediation. We look forward to receiving updates on the group's work in order to have an enhanced understanding of the evolving challenges and opportunities concerning the use of mediation in peace processes.

The United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in Mali and the United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic have also set some positive examples on the way the United Nations field presences can contribute to mediation efforts at the local level. The special political missions have been playing a useful role in that regard in diverse contexts, which should help build a repository of good practices while highlighting potential pitfalls and missed opportunities.

We acknowledge the United Nations efforts to share its mediation expertise with outside actors, including interested regional and subregional organizations. We urge all Member States to favourably consider proposals to further strengthen the capacity of the Mediation Support Unit under the Department of Political Affairs.

In order to be effective, mediation must pass the rigours of transparency and objectivity, as also noted by various delegations. Any fruitful, tangible outcome from mediation efforts will hinge on the impartiality of the mediators, their compliance with agreed mandates and respect for national sovereignty.

The importance of appropriate buy-in by the parties concerned need not be overemphasized. It is perhaps advisable to make mediation efforts visible only when the parties involved commit themselves to engaging in any such exercise in good faith and right earnest. Ad hoc and poorly coordinated mediation efforts — even when launched with the best of intentions — are not likely to advance the goal of achieving durable peace.

Promoting meaningful participation by women and young people in mediation efforts is an area that requires further investment across the board. That should go beyond mere commitments and result in mainstreaming their participation on the most critical issues at stake. As the briefers mentioned, mediation should tap into the resources and expertise offered by various stakeholders to reach to the core of humanity among those involved. In that context, we commend the initiative of the Special Adviser to the Secretary-General on the Prevention of Genocide to promote the role of religious leaders in preventing and resolving conflicts.

Bangladesh is a staunch supporter of the resolution of conflicts through peaceful, non-confrontational means. Our commitment to mediation and conciliation features prominently in our foreign policy postures. It has been most evident in our successful efforts to resolve a number of outstanding issues with our neighbouring countries, including those related to land and maritime border delimitation and common water-sharing.

In a similar vein, we would remain open to any constructive efforts by interested parties to help resolve the Rohingya humanitarian crisis, which Bangladesh has unwittingly been made a party to. We recognize the efforts initiated by the Secretary-General's Special Envoy, and by a number of Member States through their designated Special Envoys. We remain convinced that any progress in unlocking the crisis and achieving a durable solution can be possible only through the Security Council's custodianship of the issue and sustained engagement by the international community.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela.

Mr. Moncada (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela) (*spoke in Spanish*): It is an honour for the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela to take the floor on behalf of the 120 member States of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries (NAM).

At the outset, I would like to convey, on behalf of the member States of the Movement, our respects to His Excellency Lord Ahmad, Minister of State for the Commonwealth and the United Nations of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, and to express our gratitude to his delegation for convening this open debate on such an important matter, as well as for the concept note (S/2018/586, annex) that was prepared to guide our discussions today. We also wish to thank the Secretary-General, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Ms. Mossarat Qadeem for their valuable briefings.

The theme of today's open debate is a fitting occasion to pay tribute to the life and legacy of Mr. Kofi Annan, former Secretary-General of the United Nations, who in his lifetime was a genuine advocate of peace, social justice, development, human rights, solidarity and many other values so cherished by all here. Among other things, he was an expert precisely in the area of mediation and a leader who understood the importance of dialogue and inclusiveness to make this a better world for future generations. In the words of the Nobel Peace Prize winner himself, "when one acts as a mediator, one

has to think about what the biggest need of the people is". That is merely a small token of his commitment to and faith in humankind.

It bears recalling that the main objective of the Non-Aligned Movement is none other than to make a positive contribution to the establishment of a prosperous and peaceful world and the achievement of a just and equitable world order. However, that goal will be difficult to achieve as long as conflict situations persist around the world, hence the importance of diplomacy for peace, as opposed to the increasing and deepening tendency of some States to resort to unilateralism, arbitrariness and the imposition of unilateral measures.

Furthermore, and in the context of new and existing threats and challenges, it is imperative for the Movement to continue to promote multilateralism, in particular by strengthening the central role of the United Nations, including with regard to governance and by defending the interests of developing countries and preventing their marginalization. We are therefore committed to the promotion, preservation and strengthening of multilateralism and multilateral diplomacy as the most appropriate framework for resolving, through dialogue and cooperation, the problems affecting humankind.

Consequently, and bearing in mind that the challenges currently facing the international community need to be resolutely addressed by all nations through multilateralism, we underscore the fact that any initiative undertaken by the international community to promote peace must be based on high ethical values, justice and friendship, if we are to be in a position to denounce acts of aggression and strengthen and promote stability, tranquillity and lasting peace throughout the world.

NAM has historically been an advocate of the peaceful settlement of disputes, of refraining from the threat or use of force and of the increased use of the provisions of Chapters VI and VIII of the Charter of the United Nations, in particular its Article 33. In fact, it has even suggested, without success so far, that the International Law Commission consider including in its programme of work a study on the obligation of States to resort to peaceful means of settling international disputes. That would, in our view, make a positive contribution to the maintenance of international peace and security.

We also wish to take this opportunity to recall the importance of the Manila Declaration on the Peaceful Settlement of International Disputes, which was drawn up at the initiative of our Movement, and which is the first time that a normative text has developed a detailed plan and strengthened the legal framework for the peaceful settlement of international disputes. That text reflects the international community's increased confidence in the rule of law as a cornerstone not only of the peaceful settlement of disputes, but also of the maintenance of international peace and security.

During the eighteenth Mid-Term Ministerial Conference of the Movement, held in April in the city of Baku in the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Ministers recognized the growing interest in and the provision and use of mediation as a promising and cost-effective tool for the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention and resolution, without prejudice to other means mentioned in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations, including the use of arbitration and the role and functions of the International Court of Justice. It is also worth noting that, on the basis of an initiative of our Movement, the next thematic discussion to take place within the framework of the Special Committee on the Charter of the United Nations and on the Strengthening of the Role of the Organization will be precisely on mediation.

In that context, we cannot fail to emphasize the importance of the consent of all the parties concerned in order to ensure the success and the legitimacy of any mediation process if the ultimate goal is to effectively achieve durable, inclusive and comprehensive settlements, as noted in the concept note for this open debate.

In conclusion, the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries, true to its commitment to ensuring its position as an anti-war and peace-loving force, reaffirms its resolve to strengthen its role in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution, confidence-building, peacebuilding and post-conflict rehabilitation within the Non-Aligned Movement. In particular, we would also like to identify specific measures to accelerate the establishment of mechanisms within the Non-Aligned Movement to that end whose terms of reference are in line with its founding principles and those of the Charter of the United Nations and international law, while emphasizing that such a mechanism should be based on the consent of the parties concerned.

The President: May I remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Flashing lights on the collars of the microphones will prompt speakers to bring their remarks to a close after four minutes. If speakers have not concluded one minute later, the presidency will intervene and ask them to conclude. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber. I thank all colleagues for respecting that.

I now give the floor to the representative of Kenya.

Mr. Amayo (Kenya): I hope that I will be able to make my remarks within four minutes.

I take this opportunity to thank you, Mr. President, for organizing this important debate and for providing a detailed concept note (S/2018/586, annex) to guide us. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his briefing and all the previous speakers for their insightful statements.

We note that this debate on mediation and the peaceful settlement of conflicts comes at an opportune time given the evolving nature of conflicts worldwide. Now more than ever before, the prevention of conflicts remains the best way to resolve them. However, mediation cannot succeed in isolation. It is important to invest in preventing conflict, building trust and drawing up and having clear and inclusive mandates to guide the mediation process, which should also be complemented by reconciliation and post-conflict development. Mediation therefore is and remains central to the primacy of politics in the peaceful resolution of conflicts in line with the Charter of the United Nations.

It has been observed that the United Nations has registered more success in conflict management and resolution than in prevention. We therefore note with appreciation the success stories in conflict prevention that the Secretary-General outlined this morning in his briefing.

When the Secretary-General took up office in 2017, he declared his vision for a renewed emphasis by the United Nations on prevention and a surge in diplomacy for peace. We note with satisfaction that a revamped and expanded High-level Advisory Board on Mediation of the Secretary-General is now in place. However, more resources, both voluntary and assessed, should be allocated for mediation and preventive diplomacy in the sustaining peace processes.

When a conflict breaks out, it is usually more costly to resolve it. As such, as the saying goes, a dime or a cent invested in preventive mediation has more value than a dollar or a pound invested in addressing the outbreak of conflict. There is therefore a need to give more significance to prevention and to building capacities in the field, particularly in peacekeeping and other political missions.

For many decades, Kenya has been at the centre of regional peace processes and has chaired and worked with our neighbours on many peace initiatives within our subregion. We have achieved success and have also overcome challenges in the process. We therefore call on the United Nations and the international community to continue to support such worthy regional peace initiatives.

In order to achieve greater success in mediation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts, in line with the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, it is important to include women in all peace processes, including mediation and other initiatives for conflict prevention, since women and children bear the greatest brunt when conflicts occur. Furthermore, it is important to leverage technology, particularly in conflict early-warning mechanisms, to facilitate timely intervention.

We also consider that it is equally important to recognize the role of regional and subregional organizations — if I look at the African case, the African Union, the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, the East African Community, the Economic Community of West African States and the International Conference on the Great Lakes Region — in conflict prevention, management and resolution. They play a crucial role in mediation and the peaceful settlement of conflicts in their respective jurisdictions. Through continued technical assistance, capacity-building, political support and general goodwill, such organizations can even play a much greater role. If I take the example of the African Union Mission in Somalia, apart from degrading a terrorist organization, it has also been active in promoting local reconciliation and has contributed a great deal in confidence-building measures to support mutual trust among communities. They need support from the United Nations and other players.

In that regard, there is a need for adequate and predictable resources for conflict prevention and mediation. Addressing the socioeconomic conditions that lead to conflicts, promoting human rights and building national and regional capacities for conflict prevention are key to sustainable peace and development.

In conclusion, national ownership and inclusivity are very important in mediation processes. That calls for strong coordination and cooperation among the United Nations, national authorities, civil society, the private sector and other stakeholders on the basis of mutual trust and complementarity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Malaysia.

Mr. Mayong Onon (Malaysia): We would like to express our appreciation to the United Kingdom for presiding over this timely and important meeting.

Malaysia aligns itself with the statements made by the representative of Turkey, on behalf of the Group of Friends of Mediation, and by the representative of Venezuela, on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

Malaysia strongly supports the role of mediation in bringing about a just, lasting, peaceful solution between disputing parties. At the regional level, Malaysia, at the invitation of the Government of the Philippines, has been involved as a facilitator in efforts to bring about peace in the southern Philippines, consistent with the Charter of the United Nations. That effort led to the signing of the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro between the Government of the Philippines and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front on 27 March 2014. Malaysia has also played an active role as a facilitator in the southern Thailand peace dialogue since 2013. In line with the theme of today's debate, we would like to emphasize the following points.

First, we should focus on conflict prevention. As such, an early-warning system should be enhanced to identify the initial signs of conflicts, by continuously monitoring the situation in conflict-prone areas. That would involve regional organizations and the international community. Early preventive measures are crucial, as they would help address uneasiness, dissatisfaction or even concerns among them. In most cases in the past, we simply reacted to the consequences of conflicts.

Secondly, at the heart of solving various conflicts around the world is the need to address their root causes — be they political or economic or as a result of disenfranchisement and so on. To that end, all stakeholders, including the United Nations, regional organizations, international financial institutions and the private sector, must spare no effort in identifying and, subsequently, addressing those root causes.

Thirdly, it is important to sustain peace to prevent countries from relapsing into conflict. Countries emerging from conflicts should be assisted, among others, in the areas of socioeconomic development, poverty eradication and capacity-building. To sustain peace, Malaysia also encourages respect for the rule of law, good governance, tolerance, non-violence, mutual understanding, respect for diversity and inclusiveness, as well as the promotion and protection of human rights.

Lastly, lasting peace is important to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. Therefore, it is vital to galvanize the commitment, support and political will of all stakeholders, including local and national actors, women and youth, regional and international organizations and the support of the international community and all United Nations entities.

We should make every effort to implement the various decisions adopted by both the Security Council and the General Assembly that call for a continuous, cross-pillar and cross-sectoral approach to preventing conflicts and sustaining peace. In addition, Malaysia supports the Secretary-General's strategy for mediation by strengthening the capacity of the United Nations and ensuring that the Organization makes maximum use of its assets in support of mediation initiatives.

In conclusion, Malaysia remains committed to the promotion of mediation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts in the various international forums, in particular at the United Nations. We stand ready to share our experience and assist the relevant parties in the mediation process.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Slovenia.

Mrs. Blokar Drobič (Slovenia): Slovenia welcomes the initiative of the presidency of the United Kingdom to convene today's open debate.

I align myself with the statements delivered earlier today on behalf of the European Union and the Group of Friends of Mediation, of which Slovenia is a member.

I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

First, let me reiterate our support to the Secretary-General in his determination to bring mediation to the forefront of United Nations peace-related activities. We trust that the establishment of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation will further strengthen the mediation capacities of the United Nations, and hope that countries will use them.

As we previously stated in another debate here in the Security Council, when it comes to the peaceful settlement of disputes, Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations offers good guidance and should be used more often. We also wish to encourage the Council to explore ways of identifying crises and risks to international peace and security as early as possible and to address them accordingly. Preventive diplomacy, including mediation, pays for itself many times over. Preventing disputes from escalating to armed conflict will save enormous financial and other resources that could be used elsewhere, but, most of all, it will save human lives. Mediation is a powerful tool and can encourage parties to prioritize negotiations, provide alternatives to violence and end mass atrocity crimes.

Advocating a culture of peace and dialogue, together with respect for human rights and international law, is at the core of Slovenian foreign policy activities. In recent years, we have focused on promoting mediation in the Mediterranean region, through the Med-Med Initiative and the Mediterranean Women Mediators Network, by highlighting the indispensable role that women and young people play in peace and reconciliation processes. As agents of change on the ground, women are well aware of what their community needs. Therefore, they must be an integral part of processes that will lead to viable long-term solutions. Awareness campaigns on the advantages of women's participation in peace-related activities should be undertaken.

Promoting dialogue, in particular among young people, is an important way of building lasting and sustained peace through education, including about peaceful conflict resolution and mediation. One good example we wish to share is a project on school and peer mediation that Slovenia launched in August last year in Bosnia and Herzegovina. With the aim of raising awareness about the positive effects of peaceful and constructive conflict resolution in schools, teachers and students in the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Republika Srpska and the Brčko district are trained in various mediation techniques. By establishing mediation capacities among teachers and students, schools become promoters of tolerance, human rights, diversity and reconciliation. The project, which currently runs in nine primary schools, has been very well received in local communities and is already showing positive results. With its potential, we plan to expand it to other countries in the region.

Mediation is a valuable tool for conflict prevention and the peaceful settlement of disputes. It nurtures reconciliation and can help build and develop democratic and resilient societies. Although every mediation situation is unique, its basic principles can be the foundation of solving crises before they escalate anywhere in the world. That is why we must invest in raising awareness about it, educating not only future mediators, but the entire society.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Maldives.

Mr. Mohamed (Maldives): I wish to thank the United Kingdom, this month's President of the Security Council, for convening today's open debate on one of the most important instruments in the maintenance of international peace and security.

Mediation, as a tool for the pacific settlement of disputes, will be effective only if mediators and the mediation process are objective, inclusive and, most important, impartial. Over the past 10 years, the Secretary-General has taken important steps to enhance the abilities of the United Nations system in deploying various tools to prevent and resolve conflicts and sustain peace. The establishment of the Mediation Support Unit, in 2007, and the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers, in 2008, are two such important steps in the right direction.

While the institutional architecture is crucial, it is equally important that the mediation efforts of the United Nations be driven with the objective of addressing the root causes of conflicts and that mediators be equipped with the right information. There have been instances where United Nations mediators, skilled with conflict-prevention techniques, used the same toolbox to address political disputes. Therefore, the United Nations must enhance its own diagnostic capabilities to ensure that the right tools are used for the right situations.

As a number of speakers highlighted today, the success of any mediation depends, to a large part, on the inclusiveness of the mediation team and mediation process. The United Nations can appoint more women mediators who have local knowledge and understand the nuances of political and social relationships in a given situation and enable them to exert leverage. At the same time, inclusiveness must also be achieved here at United Nations Headquarters. Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations envisages a system where the Council and the General Assembly work jointly, as One United Nations, to resolve conflicts. The Maldives would like to see that oneness demonstrated more profoundly in designing and implementing mediation efforts.

Impartiality, or the lack of it, plays a decisive role in guaranteeing the success or failure of any mediation effort. United Nations officials deployed as mediators are expected to be impartial and objective. However, gaps exist between such expectations and the reality on the ground, and, as a result, various perceptions emerge that do not always help the mediation process. There is therefore a need to ensure that both the Department of Political Affairs here in New York and the mediation team in the field achieve maximum objectivity and impartiality in managing and implementing mediation efforts.

The ultimate objective of any mediation effort must go beyond the cessation of hostilities or mere short-term prevention. It is the absence of a legitimate order, more than anything else, that gives space for different kinds of disputes to evolve into conflicts. Mediation efforts, whether they are aimed at preventing or managing an actual conflict or a dispute of any kind in an intra-State situation, should seek to increase the capacity of the State in the target country to first govern and then establish a governing order that is rooted in the principles of the rule of law and good governance. My Government hopes that the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers here at the Headquarters and the teams that are active in the field take such an approach to mediation.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of South Africa.

Mr. Zaayman (South Africa): South Africa joins other Member States in expressing our appreciation to the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom for convening this open debate focused on mediation and the peaceful resolution of conflicts. We thank the Secretary-General and the Archbishop of Canterbury, in his capacity as a member of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Mediation, for their contributions to this debate.

History has taught us that the use of military force is far too costly as a means of achieving one's political objectives. The destruction of infrastructure, loss of life and environmental impact of violent armed conflicts are never worth the price of attaining one's ends. Furthermore, the Security Council's ability to make peace in conflicts while they are under way is also a costly exercise.

Reflecting on the work of the Security Council, the Council has arguably been most effective in dealing with conflicts through the deployment of peacekeepers and the imposition of measures under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations. That may at times be tantamount to putting a bandage on a festering wound. What we ought to be doing is to prevent the wound from occurring in the first place and, if it does, to ensure that the necessary measures are in place to deal with it.

It is for that reason that we believe that our efforts should be directed towards conflict prevention and sustaining peace. That requires the Security Council to support local and regional efforts in that regard. It also, importantly, requires the Council to strengthen its own instruments for the pacific settlement of disputes, in accordance with Chapter VI of the Charter. The Charter, for good reason, precedes the powers conferred to the Security Council under Chapter VII of the Charter. Before considering the use of force in Chapter VII, we must consider a peaceful political solution to the conflict, as envisaged in Chapter VI. Article 33 of that Chapter of the Charter specifically states that parties to a dispute shall first of all seek a solution through political means, including negotiation and mediation. The settlement of disputes through those means has the added advantage of assisting parties to the conflict to recognize and address its root causes and embark on a process of negotiation, thereby fostering a spirit of trust and cooperation.

In its consideration of its mandate in the maintenance of international peace and security, the Council has at its disposal a wide range of tools and resources, which should be utilized to address conflict situations to ensure that they do not occur and, if they do, that they are dealt with effectively.

The promotion of the peaceful resolution of conflict is a cornerstone of South Africa's own foreign policy. That is born out of our historical experience in successfully and peacefully transitioning to a constitutional democracy based on respect for the human rights of all persons, following decades of oppression and discriminatory governance under the apartheid regime.

As a strong proponent of the peaceful resolution of conflict, including through mediation, South Africa fully agrees with the Secretary-General's call for a surge in diplomacy for peace, in which he calls upon the Security Council to make greater use of Chapter VI of the United Nations Charter. We therefore support the promotion of the peaceful resolution to conflict through mediation, peacemaking, peacebuilding and reconstruction efforts. United Nations peacekeeping should not be a means to an end, but instead complement those essential tools of peacemaking. That will be part of our priorities during our membership of the Council as an elected member beginning in 2019.

As the Security Council deliberates on this important topic, I wish to emphasize the vital role that women play in mediation, peacemaking, peacebuilding and post-conflict reconstruction and development efforts. In particular, we believe that the Security Council's continued support for the development of female mediators, and specifically women from countries and regions affected by conflict, is imperative. Without the adequate representation of women in those efforts, the credibility of those processes is undermined. We are confident that greater representation of women in mediation efforts will correspond to a greater chance of success.

South Africa recently hosted the fourth annual Gertrude Shope Annual Dialogue Forum on Conflict Resolution and Peacemaking, which took place under the theme "Celebrating a legacy of liberation by the pan-African women: taking forward the struggle for gender equality". That theme is particularly apt as 2018 commemorates the centenary of the birth of Albertina Sisulu — a guiding light and champion of human rights and democracy in South Africa. That initiative serves as a valuable platform for women to discuss issues relating to African peacebuilding and development and to reflect on their personal experiences in that regard.

Finally, my delegation emphasizes that the Security Council should continue to support regional mechanisms, including the African Union Peace and Security Council, and prioritize consultations with African mediators in specific conflict areas. Those individuals should be called upon, where possible, to brief the Security Council to deepen its understanding of those particular conflict situations under consideration, as well as the process of mediation and its specific nuances and challenges in different contexts.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Cyprus.

Ms. Ioannou (Cyprus): We offer our thanks to the United Kingdom presidency for organizing this open debate. I wish to add the following to the European Union (EU) statement, which has already been delivered and to which we fully subscribe.

As a conflict State and a beneficiary of the long-running good offices mission of the Secretary-General in Cyprus, entrusted to him by the Security Council, Cyprus has insights and lessons learned to share, even though the role of the United Nations in our conflict is limited to facilitating agreement by the parties.

Mediation is an important tool prescribed by the Charter of the United Nations for the peaceful settlement of disputes, provided it is used in line with the Charter and in respect of the special role assigned by the latter to the Security Council. Experience has shown that there is sometimes a disconnect between the Council and the mediator appointed as part of the United Nations effort to contribute to the peaceful settlement of a dispute. For such mediation efforts to be effective, the Council must be able to assume responsibility for the work of the mediator. That would require that the two to work in tandem.

Experience has also shown that we could benefit from more clarity as regards the framework of the United Nations engagement in mediation and the code of conduct of United Nations officials acting as mediators on behalf of the Organization. We believe that a more consistent and rules-based approach is required and that the Council could develop a manual to that end.

At the core of the United Nations involvement in mediation should be the inviolable rule of conducting the process on the basis of the Organization's values and principles, the United Nations Charter and international law. Those norms and principles mean that the United Nations does not operate in a vacuum and that, while it should, of course, be impartial, it should not be neutral.

As a mediator, the United Nations must not be intrusive, but should respect the boundaries of third-party facilitation and assist the parties as they themselves shape the resolution of their dispute. The parties should own both the dispute-resolution process and its outcome, as they are the ones who will have to live with the outcome and ensure its durability and successful implementation.

As experience has also demonstrated, acrimony and blame games can arise as a result of mediation proposals that the parties are called upon to accept or reject, and therefore United Nations mediators must tread carefully, be cognizant of the complexities of a dispute and know the realm of the feasible. That is why the importance of selecting a mediator based on substantial criteria cannot be overstated. Successful mediation requires deep knowledge of local circumstances, not only those pertaining to the root causes and the particulars of a conflict, but the entire political, strategic, socioeconomic, cultural and historical context and circumstances underpinning a dispute and its resolution process. When acting as a mediator, the United Nations is well-placed to provide examples of good practices in dispute-resolution processes, but should always keep in mind that what works in one context may not be transplanted to another, even if two situations present commonalities. In addition, sharing good practices should not be a vehicle to manoeuvre the parties towards a specific direction or outcome.

The United Nations should be especially cautious with enhanced mediation methods like arbitration as a tool for political or non-judicial third-party intervention. The endorsement of the Council should be required in such cases, while it should bear in mind that, even if the consent of the parties is present, the latter can be coerced. Elaborating parameters for United Nations mediation would enable the Council to make greater, yet prudent, use of mediation as a tool for exercising its overall responsibility to maintain international peace and security in combination with other tools under its direct supervision. The Council can also strive for subsidiarity when there is a well-placed regional or local actor close to a conflict who can ably contribute to its resolution. That could also be done before the Council is seized of the matter, in line with the spirit of Article 33 of the Charter, without prejudice to the role of the Council as the eminent organ responsible for peace and security, while respecting established principles, such as the voluntary character of mediation and the consent of the parties.

Before concluding, I should like to make two equally critical points. Peacekeeping is a crucial component of conflict resolution. Enabling environments in which peace processes can be conducted depends on peacekeeping operations, as does preventing escalation within a conflict by establishing channels with relevant actors on the ground and developing an understanding of local circumstances. Last but not least, the participation of women in conflict resolution is now universally supported, and it can be a game changer. For that to happen, however, such participation needs to be meaningful, and the way for it to be meaningful is by achieving gender equality more broadly in a society and reflecting that in the participation of women across public life and in core political decision-making.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Azerbaijan.

Mr. Aliyev (Azerbaijan): At the outset, I would like to thank the presidency of the United Kingdom for organizing today's open debate on the important topic of mediation and the settlement of disputes.

Challenges to peace and security facing the world today call for strengthening the international legal order and redoubled efforts at all levels towards both the prevention and resolution of conflicts and crises. It is critical that mediation frameworks not be used as a tool for entrenching situations that have resulted from the unlawful use of force, war crimes, crimes against humanity, acts of genocide and ethnic cleansing. In the same vein, it is important that the international community consistently oppose and reject any attempt to cover up and consolidate acts of aggression and other illegal acts through misinterpreting international legal norms and principles. The established principle of the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory and the ensuing obligation of non-recognition of situations resulting from serious violations of international law must be applied and enforced universally and unconditionally.

Those obligations are part of the common rules-based international order. They are universally binding and apply to all situations and conflicts, whatever their distinct root causes or nature. Equally important is to ensure the implementation of resolutions adopted by the principal organs of the United Nations. It is unacceptable that armed aggression against sovereign

States and resultant military occupation of their territories continue despite the relevant Security Council resolutions. As is known, through resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993), all of which were unanimously adopted, the Security Council condemned the use of force against my country, Azerbaijan, the occupation of its territories, attacks on civilians and bombardments of inhabited areas in my country, and reaffirmed respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the inviolability of international borders and the inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory. In response to territorial claims and forceful actions, the Security Council reconfirmed in those resolutions that the Nagorno Karabakh region is an integral part of the Republic of Azerbaijan and demanded the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all occupied territories.

However, unfortunately, key Security Council demands have yet to be implemented, and mediation efforts, which have been conducted for 26 years within the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, have yet to yield results. On the contrary, despite earlier warnings, demands and condemnation by the international community against the background of ongoing efforts towards the political settlement of the conflict, deliberate actions are being carried out in the occupied territories with a view to securing their colonization and annexation in clear violation of international law. Such actions include, inter alia, the implantation of settlers, the destruction and the appropriation of historical and cultural heritage, and the exploitation and pillaging of and illicit trade in assets, natural resources and other resources in the seized territories. As a country suffering from the occupation of its territories and the forced displacement of hundreds of thousands of its citizens, Azerbaijan is the party with the greatest interest in the earliest possible political settlement of the conflict and reversal of its consequences. At the same time, no settlement to the conflict can be reached that violates the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and is inconsistent with international law.

The primary objective of the ongoing peace process, the mandate of which is based on the Security Council resolutions I just mentioned, is to ensure the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories of Republic of Azerbaijan and the return of forcibly displaced persons to their homes and property. Achieving that objective is imperative and can in no way be presented as a compromise or used as a bargaining chip in the conflict settlement process. The military occupation and ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijan territories do not represent a solution and will never bring about peace, reconciliation or stability.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Archbishop Bernardito Cleopas Auza, Permanent Observer of the Observer State of the Holy See to the United Nations.

Archbishop Auza: At the beginning of December 1978, the leaders of Argentina and Chile concluded that all possibilities had been exhausted with regard to reaching an agreement that would end their age-old dispute concerning the determination of their southern borders. Pope John Paul II pleaded with them not to close the door, while insisting that they consider the problem calmly and responsibly. Forty years after the peaceful settlement of their dispute, Argentina and Chile remain deeply grateful that their mutual decision to request the mediation of the Holy See spared their peoples from the scourge of war. Argentina and Chile, as well as Mozambique and, most recently, Colombia have set an example of how it is always necessary to leave open mediation avenues to settle disputes and never abandon the process of patient dialogue and negotiations so as to reach a just and worthy solution by peaceful means proper to civilized peoples.

In contrast, there continue to be blatant cases in which parties in dispute have made the fatal move of resorting to arms without giving mediation the time to mature towards a peaceful settlement. Indeed, as Pope Francis affirmed during his 2017 visit to Colombia, the quest for peace is an open-ended endeavour. The more demanding the path that leads to peace and understanding, the greater our efforts must be. The focus of mediation and conflict resolution must be founded on respecting and defending human dignity and the common good. It is impossible to find a just way out of situations that create violence without this principle of recognizing and restoring the dignity of those who suffer during conflicts.

A key issue in the international community's mediation efforts in the settlement of disputes is fair, impartial mediation. While we may lamentthe ill-will of parties to resort to mediation, we must also ask whether we have impartial, unselfish and persevering mediators

with whom the parties in dispute can have a relationship of mutual trust. Trustworthiness is mediators' greatest asset, the open secret in their capacity to build mutual trust among the parties to a dispute. A trustworthy mediator engenders trust by being able to objectively identify the interests of the parties and, in spite of and beyond those particular interests, by being able to lead the parties to see their specific interests within the dynamic of working together for the common purpose of achieving a greater good that is mutually beneficial to all the parties involved.

Another fundamental lesson that we have learned in the experiences of the Catholic Church in its mediation efforts is that authentic mediation requires the participation of all the parties involved — not just of those who exercise leadership, but the entire community, particularly those who have suffered in the conflict. In that sense, mediation involves listening and being close to the victims of the injustices and violence generated by conflict.

Participation in the peace process takes place at various levels, from the negotiating table to grassroots initiatives. What is important is that each level creates mechanisms that ensure that everyone works around the shared goal of building peace. The sustainability of the process will be effective to the extent that there is broad participation. Fostering inclusive social relationships during the peace process is also key to the successful implementation of any peaceful settlement of a dispute. Conflicts leave very deep wounds, and an inclusive, participatory process for the mediation and resolution of disputes is essential to the process of healing and reconciliation, which continues long after the ink is dry. A good mediator, while working to settle disputes, builds a future of peace. Mediators are artisans and instruments of peace. We thank those who have done such a precious service to humankind.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Favre (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Switzerland warmly welcomes the holding of this Security Council open debate on mediation and the peaceful resolution of conflict.

Switzerland fully supports the efforts of the United Nations in peacefully settling disputes. In the light of our long experience with the use of our good offices and our partnership with the United Nations in the field of mediation, I want to focus on the following three points.

First, mediation is a valuable tool for conflict resolution, but experience shows that it cannot be considered a cure-all. It cannot work effectively unless certain conditions are met. Above all, it is voluntary, and the parties to the conflict themselves must be willing to participate. In addition, mediation initiatives should be launched at the right moment, when a conflict is ripe for resolution. It is equally important to ensure that mediation processes are truly inclusive, so that parties with a vital role to play in the peace agreement, and those affected by its consequences, are consulted and involved throughout the negotiation process. Mediation is a tool that can be used at several stages of a conflict, including before violence has broken out and after agreements are signed, in order to contribute to sustainable peace.

Secondly, the Security Council is a key player, capable of strongly influencing the conditions needed for good mediation. In that regard, as was the case during the conflict in Yemen in 2011, a careful warning from the Security Council announcing the potential imposition of United Nations sanctions may help a mediator to convince the opposing sides to sit down at the negotiating table. Sectoral sanctions targeting sources of funding essential to parties to a conflict can influence their cost-benefit analysis and thereby contribute to their decision to participate in negotiations. However, Security Council sanctions can also complicate mediation efforts. For example, sanctions on entire groups can stigmatize them and complicate the task of mediators, who will find it more difficult to communicate with them. Furthermore, sanctions imposed on specific parties to a conflict can sometimes affect perceptions of the impartiality of the United Nations and acceptance of the mediators whom it mandates. It is important for the Security Council to carefully evaluate the impact of its sanctions in conflict situations where the United Nations is also conducting mediation activities, so as to ensure complementarity between the sanctions and mediation processes. Switzerland is currently giving support to academic research on the link between mediation and sanctions.

Thirdly, we strongly believe that mediation's effectiveness lies in the professionalism of the mediator. We are making a concrete contribution to achieving that objective, specifically thanks to the master's degree in mediation in peace processes offered by the Federal

Institute of Technology in Zurich with the support of the Governments of Switzerland, Finland, Germany and Sweden.

We welcome the progress that the United Nations has made in the past decade in enhancing the effectiveness of its mediation efforts. We especially welcome the establishment of the Mediation Support Unit within the Department of Political Affairs, which is enabling the United Nations to become an effective and professional global mediator, and we propose that it be further strengthened in the future.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Viet Nam.

Mr. Dang Dinh Quy (Viet Nam): At the outset, I would like to express my appreciation to the United Kingdom presidency for convening today's important debate. My thanks also go to the Secretary-General, the Archbishop of Canterbury and the co-founder of the PAIMAN Alumni Trust for their informative briefings.

Viet Nam aligns itself with the statement delivered earlier by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

In a world where disputes and conflicts are increasingly complicated and are having ever more devastating effects on the humanitarian and development fronts, it is crucial that the United Nations continue to play a primary and central role in preventing conflicts, settling disputes by peaceful means and assisting countries in overcoming the consequences of those conflicts. Viet Nam therefore fully supports the Secretary-General's call for a surge in diplomacy for peace, including promoting the use of mediation throughout the cycle of a conflict. In order to best strengthen and support those efforts, I would like to emphasize the following.

First, the United Nations should make full use of the available tools of preventive diplomacy and its good offices and mediation, including through the Secretary-General's special envoys and political missions, in order to help strengthen capacity-building for mediators and opposing parties on the ground. It must also enhance coordination and synergies within the United Nations system, as well as partnerships between the United Nations and regional and subregional organizations, with due attention to encouraging the broader participation of all stakeholders, including women and young people, so as to help affected countries improve their national capacities to address the root causes of conflict.

Secondly, the Security Council must remain united in pursuing the peaceful resolution of disputes and conflicts, including through mediation at early stages and by making greater use of the provisions of the Charter of the United Nations, particularly Article 33. In that regard, we appreciate the meaningful political support that the Council has given to the Secretary-General and to his good offices and other regional actors in their mediation efforts addressing regional and country-specific issues.

Thirdly, we reaffirm the vital importance of regional organizations in the maintenance of international peace and security. In our region, the Association of Southeast Asian Nations has been contributing proactively to promoting dialogue and mutual understanding, fostering an environment of cooperation and friendship, establishing regional codes of conduct, rules and norms and implementing various confidence-building and preventive measures to manage differences and settle disputes by peaceful means, in full respect for international law.

Fourthly, we urge the parties to a dispute or conflict to create conditions that favour mediation efforts by refraining from any action that could escalate tension and complying strictly with international law. Any measure must have the consent of the parties concerned, take into account their legitimate interests and conform to the principles of objectivity, fairness and respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of States and equality in international relations.

In conclusion, we reiterate our strong commitment to working closely with the Security Council, the United Nations generally and all partners to explore further ways to enforce these peaceful tools in a more effective and timely manner, in order to ensure that world peace and security can be achieved, secured and sustained.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Qatar.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on successfully presiding over the Security Council this month and convening this meeting on mediation. I also want to thank the Secretary-General and the Archbishop of Canterbury for their valuable briefings this morning.

I associate myself with the statement delivered by the representative of Turkey on behalf of the Group of Friends of Mediation.

As we all know, mediation has always been an integral part of diplomacy and the settlement of disputes, while negotiation, mediation, arbitration and reconciliation are the first choices when it comes to dealing with disputes. Their importance is enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations. Mediation is not a substitute for other tools for preventing conflicts but rather a complement to them as part of a comprehensive strategy for preventing, resolving and managing disputes. Beyond that, we also have to address the root causes of disputes, while recognizing how peace, security, development and human rights are all linked. In recent years the international community has become more aware of those facts and of the importance of prioritizing preventive diplomacy and the peaceful settlement of disputes, including through mediation. Every two years, for example, the General Assembly adopts a resolution on mediation submitted by Turkey and Finland and sponsored by a large group of countries, including the State of Qatar. The report of the Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations has focused on the fact that peacekeeping mandates must work to help achieve political solutions to crises.

At the same time, it is encouraging that there are developments in mediation's arrangements and tools at various levels that are essential in order to stay abreast of the changing nature of today's conflicts and threats to international peace and security. We are also encouraged by the increasing number of mediation actors. There have been progress and practical achievements on the mediation agenda at the United Nations, especially since the establishment in the Secretariat of the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers in support of mediation efforts worldwide. We commend the Secretary-General for prioritizing preventive diplomacy and mediation and for his efforts to enhance the performance of the United Nations in that regard, including his initiative to establish the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. We also underscore the important role of civil society and the private sector in this area. In many instances the success of mediation strategies relies on identifying and engaging the right stakeholders. Moreover, it is important to engage women and young people in peacebuilding and mediation efforts to help to ensure their efficiency and sustainability.

The State of Qatar has unique mediation experience, especially in the Arab and Islamic world. Our mediation efforts have often led to the successful settlement of disputes or to avoiding further escalation, and the Council has recognized and supported them. Integrity and inclusiveness are among the factors that help mediation to succeed. We have no special purpose in mediating except to ensure successful dialogue and reconciliation in the settlement of a dispute. We must also take into account the ways in which conflicts differ and recognize the specific traits of each case. It is the parties to a conflict who have the primary responsibility for resolving it. They must recognize the joint interest they all have in achieving reconciliation and settling their disputes.

The State of Qatar is interested in mediation because it lies at the heart of the maintenance of peace and security and the peaceful resolution of conflict. We also believe that it is important to support and sustain peace, and we therefore contributed to the preparations for the General Assembly's high-level meeting in April on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (see A/72/PV.83). We have chosen to join the international community in confronting our shared challenges, and we will continue to do so at the regional and international levels, despite the unfair blockade and illegal unilateral measures that have been imposed on Qatar since 5 June 2017. We will continue to honour our obligations in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations and international law, and we will work on resolving conflicts through peaceful means. We therefore reiterate our appreciation for the mediation efforts headed by His Highness the Amir of our sister State of Kuwait aimed at resolving the crisis in the Gulf and thereby enhancing the security and stability of the region and peace and security internationally.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar hopes that the Security Council will continue to support all actors and stakeholders in the area of mediation in order to prevent and resolve conflicts and ensure that they do not recur, with a view to sparing future generations the threats and woes of such conflicts.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the United Arab Emirates.

Mrs. Alhefeiti (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to thank the United Kingdom for its valuable efforts during its presidency

of the Security Council this month and for convening today's important debate.

Nowhere are peaceful solutions and mediation efforts needed more than in the Middle East, which has been destabilized by conflict. In order to address the current conflicts in the region, the United Arab Emirates remains deeply committed to the work of achieving political settlements and the United Nations-led processes that underpin them, particularly in Libya, Palestine, Syria and Yemen. We know that the surge in diplomacy for peace that the Secretary-General has called for is critical not only to achieving lasting political settlements of these conflicts but also to preventing similar conflicts from breaking out in the first place. To that end, the United Arab Emirates is working to foster diplomatic efforts to establish peace throughout the region and its surroundings.

While there are many political crises that require attention, there are some bright spots where diplomacy has worked, agreements have been signed and mediation has succeeded. We were especially pleased to see the recent peace agreement reached between Eritrea and Ethiopia, and we believe it will have a far-reaching and positive impact on the whole Horn of Africa. The United Arab Emirates would like to make the following recommendations for strengthening mediation, as part of a robust approach aimed not only at settling disputes peacefully but also at preventing them from happening in the first place.

First, the States Members of the United Nations and the Security Council should give full effect to the legal framework for the peaceful settlement of disputes established by Article 33 of the Charter of the United Nations. While the responsibility for the peaceful settlement of disputes lies with the parties to a dispute, the Security Council has an important role to play, and it should be ready to do what is necessary and appropriate to support and complement the efforts of Member States. The United Nations has historically played a vital role in the peaceful settlement of disputes and will continue to do so, and in that regard we support the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board for Mediation.

Secondly, if we are to strengthen mediation efforts, they must be inclusive, particularly of women. There is clear proof that when peace negotiations include women, peace lasts longer. Women must not just be at the table during negotiations, they must be mediators themselves.

Thirdly, we urge the Security Council and United Nations-led mediators to work closely with regional organizations in seeking lasting political solutions. To that end, we echo the Secretary-General's call for strengthening coordination with regional organizations as part of his ongoing efforts to reform the Organization.

In conclusion, I would like to take a moment to remember one of the great mediators of our time, former Secretary-General Kofi Annan. His loss has occasioned deep sorrow throughout the United Nations. Mr. Annan, a master of the art of diplomacy, created a long legacy of successful negotiations with numerous parties from all walks of life in his efforts to establish peace across the world.

Finally, I would like to point out that when developing procedures for settling disputes it is essential that parties to conflicts participate in good faith without trying to undermine those procedures or exploit them for particular political purposes.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Haiti.

Mr. Regis (Haiti) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, on behalf of the Haitian delegation, I would like to welcome the initiative of the British presidency of the Security Council to convene this open debate on the very important topic of mediation and conflict resolution. It is certainly not a new one; it is in line with the commitment of the Security Council, following a similar debate (see S/PV.6108) held in April 2009, almost 10 years ago, to exploring ways to strengthen the promotion of mediation as an important means of peacefully settling disputes.

Threats to international peace and security today have become increasingly complex. The multitude of non-State actors and of identity- and ethnic-based conflicts, the rise of terrorism, the correlation between violent conflict and poverty — almost half of those who live in extreme poverty are in fragile or conflict-affected countries, according to the Secretary-General's 2018 report on peacebuilding and sustaining peace (S/2018/43) — and the shortcomings of the international preventive system are all factors that call for redoubling our efforts to achieve peace. That includes improving our mechanisms for preventing and resolving disputes and conflicts under the Charter of the United Nations,

so that we can work more effectively upstream, save more lives and ease human suffering.

As is frequently pointed out, one of the major failings of the international community is its inability to prevent conflict. As we know, that inability often comes from behaviour that is passive and insufficiently proactive, and even from inertia on the part of the main body responsible for the maintenance of peace and security. The Security Council has shown how divided it can be when the so-called vital interests of the permanent members take precedence over their commitment to respecting the universal values on which the Charter is founded. Their abuse of the right of the veto deprives the Organization of the unity necessary for the implementation of appropriate action, which severely handicaps the efforts of the international community when it comes to resolving conflicts that are all too often accompanied by unacceptable violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

There are myriad missed opportunities in that regard, of which the seven-year civil war in Syria is a particularly tragic example. Clearly we must remedy this kind of paralysis that sometimes takes hold of the United Nations and tends to fuel cynicism about it. Some critics have gone so far as to wonder if this state of affairs is not ultimately favouring those who do not want the United Nations to be too effective. The fact is that the United Nations often waits too long to act. We have not been there when people needed us, as the President of the General Assembly rightly noted last year, adding that we could have done more to respond to conflicts and even more to prevent them from happening.

For his part, the Secretary-General has reminded us at a very opportune time that where wars are raging, whether in Syria, Yemen, South Sudan or elsewhere, or where there are long-standing disputes such as the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, we need more mediation, arbitration and creative diplomacy. The Haitian delegation endorses that vision. In that regard, we support the efforts of the international community to put greater emphasis on certain tools, such as mediation, that can contribute to the maintenance and sustainability of peace, in the spirit of the recent twin Security Council and General Assembly resolutions on sustaining peace (resolutions 2282 (2016) and 70/262). My delegation welcomes the Secretary-General's establishment of the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation, whose members include one of my compatriots. The Council's purpose is to support mediation initiatives and strengthen the collaboration of the United Nations with regional organizations, non-governmental organizations and other actors involved in mediation around the world.

That approach is particularly significant in the context of the renewed focus on prevention and mediation activities as part of United Nations peace diplomacy. It gives mediation an even bigger profile when we consider that the United Nations record in that regard continues to be bleak. For we have to admit that the United Nations often struggles to impose itself on events, even though it has achieved some notable successes. According to some statistics, during the 50 years from 1945 to 1995, United Nations mediation efforts represented only a quarter of the total reported attempts, and only half of those were led by States.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the United Nations, especially the Security Council and the Secretariat, must be ready to use its good offices and its ability to mediate proactively wherever the situation requires it. We must therefore spare no effort to ensure that the Organization has the resources to fully assume that role, while strengthening the coherence that is so vital to international efforts in support of national Governments and their peoples. Only then can international peace and security, sustainable development and human rights, to which we are all committed, emerge victorious.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Armenia.

Mr. Margaryan (Armenia): Armenia would like to express its appreciation to the United Kingdom delegation for convening this open debate and providing us with a comprehensive concept note (S/2018/586, annex). We also thank the Secretary-General, Lord Ahmad of Wimbledon, the Archbishop of Canterbury and Ms. Qadeem for their briefings today. The large number of delegations participating in today's debate reflects the level of interest in the topic, as mediation continues to provide important avenues for the peaceful settlement of disputes in many parts of the world.

Mediation can be a critical tool for resolving existing disputes, as well as preventing emerging ones, paving the way for durable peace, development and cooperation, the core values that lie at the heart of the United Nations. In that regard, we would like to pay tribute to the memory and legacy of former Secretary-

General Kofi Annan, a dedicated multilateralist and visionary for peace, whose contribution to conflict prevention through mediation has inspired so many in the ranks of United Nations diplomats and people around the world.

Regional and subregional organizations play a crucial role in mediation, the peaceful settlement of disputes and conflict prevention. With their particular regional experience and expertise, they often have a better understanding of local circumstances and can bring tailored approaches and effective tools. Well-established and internationally mandated mediation formats within regional organizations have the potential and capacity to address the complex challenges in specific situations. The effective use of the capacity of regional agencies and arrangements in mediation, conflict prevention and pacific settlement of disputes is also provided for in Article 33 and under Chapter VIII of the Charter of the United Nations.

For any mediation process to be credible and effective, it must be based on a consensus and duly mandated with a deep understanding of the root causes and anatomy of the conflict. Furthermore, every effort should be made to avoid the duplication of mediation activities, whereby multiple and diffuse processes often lead to fragmented responses and can be counterproductive.

Armenia welcomes the unwavering and continued support of the United Nations system and of the Secretary-General to the mediating efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe Minsk Group co-chairmanship of France, the Russian Federation and the United States for the peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

The consolidated support of the international community for the negotiating process within the agreed format is of the utmost importance, not least in order to avoid procrastination, deviation from agreed principles of the settlement and forum shopping. The people of Nagorno Karabakh have exercised their right to self determination. Within the past three decades, an entire generation has been raised free from any foreign domination.

Strengthening the role of women in peace and security, particularly those affected by conflicts, remains an important objective in translating resolution 1323 (2000) into action. Armenia attaches great importance to the implementation of resolution 1323 (2000) and we support calls to increase the proportion of women in mediation processes. In 2017, an inter-ministerial working group was been set up in Armenia to elaborate a national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1323 (2000). The drafting process has been conducted through extensive public consultations with the involvement of civil society representatives, in particular women-led organizations.

The persistence and complexity of many crisis situations around the world necessitate the careful deliberation of early-warning mechanisms and capacities for timely and effective mediation. Early action and preventive engagement can help reduce human suffering before conflicts develop into humanitarian emergencies.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Fiji.

Mr. Prasad (Fiji): I thank the United Kingdom for organizing today's debate of crucial importance to the United Nations in responding to more complex, multifaceted and multi-layered conflicts across the world. I also thank The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, and Ms. Qadeem for their thoughtful and incisive comments this morning.

The United Nations needs to become better at understanding, interpreting and responding to the new drivers of conflict and insecurity. I shall draw the attention of the Security Council to three of those drivers.

Fiji and many small island States find themselves on the front lines of climate change. The impacts of climate change are well understood; less well understood are its consequences for conflict. As crops fail, coastal lands become less fertile, excessive and frequent rains wash away livelihoods, the competition for land and resources become more intense and families and communities are forced to relocate. That trend and the intensifying competition for resources associated with it is fuelling conflict across many countries. In turn, those conflicts are becoming more intense and, as they do so, they are becoming more complex.

There is a similar dynamic arising with regard to oceans, which are facing great distress. Warming waters, acidification and the illegal extraction of marine resources are creating severe pressures on coastal communities. As marine resources become scarce,

conflicts among coastal communities and between coastal communities and non-coastal communities, the private sector and Governments are intensifying and becoming more prevalent. Some of those have the potential to spill over into inter-State conflicts.

Climate change and rising sea levels are inducing serious water stress across many islands. Many countries across the Pacific now find themselves in the midst of a serious drought. Competition for water, managing water distribution and managing recovery from drought also fuel conflict. Women and children are especially impacted by conflicts that arise from water stress.

I have highlighted those three interlinking drivers of conflict for a special reason. First, with current trends, those are likely to turn into full-blown intercommunity conflicts. Secondly, they have the potential to spill over into inter-State conflicts. And, thirdly, the cost of managing them can potentially wipe away the progress that small island States on the front lines of climate change are making in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals.

There are three "asks" today. The first is to acknowledge that climate and ocean stress have already become conflict drivers. The scond is that the United Nations development system reforms need to position the Organization in a way that enables it to bring about systematic understanding of those conflict drivers and the conflicts themselves in the United Nations. The third, and most important, is to reposition the United Nations to play a proactive, preventive role in conflict resolution, while supporting communities in mediating climate and ocean stress-induced conflicts and therefore stopping them from spilling over into open intra- and inter-State conflicts.

Business as usual cannot be an option. Reframing the Organization's mediation perspectives, strengthening United Nations capabilities and skills and building an institutional architecture to support mediation capabilities for these newer types of conflict is overdue. Fiji is overstressed in responding to the adverse development impacts of climate change, managing our recovery from persistent cyclones flooding and drought. In spite of that, we stand ready to support the Secretary-General's efforts in this area.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Kingdom of Bahrain.

Mr. Alrowaiei (Bahrain) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like to congratulate the delegation of the United Kingdom on holding this important meeting as numerous countries around the world in general, and in the Middle East in particular, are facing many challenges and conflicts. That requires activating mediation mechanisms and enhancing dialogue at all levels to achieve peace and stability.

The Kingdom of Bahrain believes in resolving disputes and establishing stability and peace in the world through joint political will and respect for the foundations on which the relationships between countries are built. These include good neighbourliness, non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries and honouring international treaties and conventions. Therefore, the best way to deal with the crises is by enhancing good offices and mediation efforts in any dispute.

At the United Nations level, the Special Envoys of the Secretary-General shoulder considerable responsibilities as they endeavour with determination to manage crises and mobilize the necessary political will to urge all parties to a conflict to take a seat at the negotiating table.

In that regard, I would like to highlight the role played by special political missions in numerous countries. They address many situations in flexible and different ways, and do what they can to support the political process and work with partners to ensure sustainable peace. Many such missions are working under difficult security circumstances. Hence, the international community must provide them with every possible form of support and assistance so that they can carry out their work to achieve reconciliation and establish security and stability.

I would also like to commend the initiative of the Secretary-General to establish the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation in order to provide counselling on mediation initiatives, in addition to dialogue and negotiations. We consider that initiative to be a unique and important one. We are confident that the members of the Security Council will, with their experience, push forward mediation and dialogue processes in many important situations while working with all parties to the conflict.

I would also like to commend the active role of women and youth in mediation and dialogue processes.

They are a main and effective element in bringing about peace and stability.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of Bahrain emphasizes that respecting the sovereignty of countries and the principle of non-interference in their internal affairs are among the most important factors for achieving and sustaining security and peace. Mediation efforts in any dispute will be successful only if all parties, in particular external parties, respect the principles of good neighbourliness and non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, while honouring international treaties and principles.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the Sultanate of Oman.

Mr. Al Harthy (Oman) (*spoke in Arabic*): As we are approaching the end of the month, I would like to congratulate you, Mr. President, on successfully presiding over the Security Council during August and on the activities organized, including this debate.

I would like to associate myself with the statement delivered by the representative of Turkey on behalf of the Group of Friends on Mediation, of which Oman is a member.

We support the efforts of Secretary-General António Guterres to enhance the concept of sustainable peace and to establish the High-level Advisory Board on Mediation, comprised of high-profile persons with distinguished expertise.

The use of mediation, diplomacy and political means in resolving disputes at the international level is a key principle in the work of the United Nations, including the work of the Council. That is the original means of taking action; it is the normal course to be taken by humankind, designed to resolve disagreements through dialogue and reaching understanding.

Several prerequisites are necessary for any mediation so succeed. They include, credibility, sustainability and impartiality towards all disputing parties. Each party should have its minimum demands and aspirations met.

In the Sultanate of Oman, we strongly believe that dialogue is the best means to resolve any dispute. This is a fundamental principle in Oman's foreign policy. Upon the directives of His Majesty Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, the Sultanate has assumed its regional and international role guided by that lofty principle. The Sultanate is willing and ready to continue playing this positive role to help resolve the issues particularly in our region, in collaboration with international organizations and the parties concerned.

The world — and our region in particular — faces many challenges and wars. The peoples of the region are paying the price, at the expense of their security, stability and development. Therefore today, more than ever before, we need to advance mediation, peaceful settlements and diplomacy to avoid further loss and destruction.

In conclusion, we hope that the role of the United Nations — including that of the Security Council and the Secretary-General, as well as all peace-loving countries — will be strengthened in order to synergize efforts for the success of mediation all over the world so that international peace and security prevail.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Indonesia.

Mr. Soemirat (Indonesia): Indonesia thanks the United Kingdom for convening this very important open debate. We also thank the Secretary-General and The Most Reverend and Right Honourable Justin Welby, Archbishop of Canterbury, as well as the other briefers, for their valuable perspectives on advancing mediation and conflict resolution.

Indonesia associates itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Turkey on behalf of the Group of Friends of Mediation and by the representative of Venezuela on behalf of the Movement of Non-Aligned Countries.

The Secretary-General's report on United Nations activities in support of mediation (A/72/115) presented some grim realities: the number of major civil wars almost tripled in the decade up to 2015, with an unprecedented increase in conflict fatalities and displaced persons. Another persisting observation in the report is the substantial increase in the internationalization and regionalization of conflicts, thus complicating their resolution. We are pleased that the Secretary-General has designated conflict prevention as a top priority. We will assume a leading role on that agenda and call for a surge in diplomacy.

As mediation is an essential component of sustaining peace, we are also encouraged by the recent adoption of resolutions on peacebuilding and sustaining peace, both in the General Assembly and the Security Council. The

latest endorsement of the Secretary-General's proposed reform of the United Nations peace and security pillar by Member States is also very positive. Everyone should do their utmost to translate the those resolutions and reforms to ensure concrete outcomes for those affected on the ground. Let us see to it that mediation, conflict resolution and peacebuilding are actualized effectively inside and outside the United Nations.

Indonesia has long called for a greater recourse to Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations. As our Foreign Minister said during elections for non-permanent Security Council seats in June, Indonesia — as a true partner for world peace, security and prosperity — is ready to play its role in the peaceful settlement of disputes. In that context, I would like to emphasize several points.

First, promoting the habit of dialogue and respect for international law is important. While we fully support dialogue and mediation, it is crucial that they be pursued on the foundations of international law, justice and fair play. That protects the weak and prevents the mighty from acting on impulse.

Secondly, more engagement and partnerships with regional and subregional organizations should be undertaken. The deft matching of United Nations resources and capacities with unparalleled local knowledge, expertise and ties can greatly elevate prospects for the success of mediation. As an example, in our region, member States of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and China have finally agreed on a single draft code of conduct negotiating text to further settle issues in our region. Such regional resolutions should be further encouraged within the United Nations framework.

Thirdly, conflict prevention and mediation should also be supported by more reliable resourcing and capacities. The effective and efficient management of all mediation and conflict-prevention activities by the Secretariat, particularly the Department of Political Affairs, is indeed most pertinent.

Fourthly, we underline the resolution of root causes of conflicts in a just and even-handed manner, with the Security Council fulfilling its role according to principles of the Charter, international law and international humanitarian law. In thatr egard, we agree with the Secretary-General during his opening remarks this morning that the Council can play its mediation role only if it is united.

The United Nations must live up to its promise to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, but as central as it is, the United Nations alone — or a handful of countries and civil society groups by themselves — cannot broker peace. We must all play our respective roles responsibly and support United Nations efforts.

Indonesia commends the Secretary-General's Special Envoys, peace emissaries and the Standby Team of Senior Mediation Advisers for their vital work, along with the Secretariat for continuing to strengthen the Mediation Support Unit. We also appreciate the work of the Secretary-General's High-level Advisory Board on Mediation. Together with Finland, Indonesia was pleased to co-host the second meeting of the Advisory Board, which took place in Helsinki in June.

Allow me to conclude, Mr. President, by congratulating your delegation on a successful presidency of the Council throughout this month. Let me assure you that Indonesia remains fully determined to help enable credible dialogue, lasting peace and harmony, be it nationally, regionally or globally.

The President: The representative of Pakistan has asked for the floor to make a further statement. I now give him the floor.

Mr. Warraich (Pakistan): My delegation is compelled to take the floor at this late hour in response to the statement made by the representative of India earlier today.

While there was nothing novel in the content of the Indian assertions — which we will not dignify with a response — what was remarkable was the setting chosen to undertake this disingenuous attempt to disencumber the United Nations of its central role in the pacific settlement of disputes.

To pontificate from the altar of the Security Council for the so-called integral part of India is unfortunately yet another flight of fancy that the Indian delegation has made a vocation of practising. It is also a blatant disregard of multiple resolutions of the Security Council that recognize Jammu and Kashmir as a disputed territory, the final status of which is yet to be determined in accordance with the resolutions of the Security Council.

We wonder why a mere assertion of that fact has caused the Indian delegation so much panic. Rightfully, it is the anxiety of an occupying Power — an all too

familiar syndrome. Instead of blaming the storm on the ship, India should recognize that the United Nations is not ill-suited to undertake responsibility for the peaceful settlement of disputes. It is in fact India's continued occupation of Jammu and Kashmir that is ill-suited to the purposes of maintaining peace and stability in our region and the world.

The President: There are no further names inscribed on the list of speakers.

That leaves me, as President, to thank all of the participants in today's meeting. In particular, I would like to thank the Security Council Affairs Division for its support, as well as the interpreter for their tireless work throughout a long day.

We will be following up today's open debate with a President's summary, which will summarize the points made. We will distribute that in due course.

The meeting rose at 5 p.m.